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ABSTRACT

This document is designed to help develop the communication skills of individuals training for the position of workplace assessor in Australia's National Training Framework and practicing workplace assessors who require additional assistance with on-the-job communication skills. The document consists of 11 units of study that each contain some or all of the following: background information; written learning activities; role play/discussion activities; and checklists. The following are among the topics covered: (1) reading skills (skimming, scanning, reference skills); (2) informing appropriate personnel (negotiation, assertive techniques, presenting one's case in terms of others' needs, solving problems creatively, other language skills in the negotiation process); (3) assessment information sessions; (4) putting candidates at ease; (5) giving instructions; (6) questioning techniques (types of questions, questions to avoid, question scenarios, starting a question bank); (7) seeking clarification; (8) giving feedback (inviting candidates to self-assess, feedback to candidates who are competent, feedback to candidates who are not yet competent, language skills involved in giving negative information); (9) nonverbal communication (how we communicate, body language, use of space, dress/appearance, tone of voice); (10) plain English (suggestions to make writing clearer, designing a document, writing instructions); and (11) writing feedback reports and recommendations. A glossary and an answer key are included. (MN)

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ED 462 599

COMMUNICATION SKILLS

FOR WORKPLACE ASSESSORS

Deborah Corbett

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INTRODUCTION

Assessment plays an important role in the National Training Framework by being a critical quality control mechanism. It is important that workplace assessors, who are largely responsible for the implementation of the system, have the skills to be able to successfully operate in the system.

Communication skills for assessors on the job

Workplace assessors not only need to be experts in their technical field, they also need effective communication skills for tasks, such as:

- giving information sessions to candidates and other workplace personnel
- negotiating with workplace personnel
- putting candidates at ease before an assessment
- explaining the assessment process
- giving feedback to candidates
- giving clear and concise spoken instructions
- writing instructions
- writing feedback reports and recommendations

The audience

Communication Skills for Workplace Assessors is aimed at candidates who are completing training in Plan, Conduct and Review Assessment but need extra assistance or 'practice' with the communication skills required of the training. It is also aimed at Workplace Assessors who have completed training but require assistance with on-the-job communication skills.

Candidates could be from either an English speaking or non-English speaking background.

How to use this resource

Communication Skills for Workplace Assessors can be used by trainers as a training resource for:

- face-to-face or distance learning delivery of the units Plan, Conduct and Review Assessment
- a stand alone course in Communication Skills for Workplace Assessors
- professional development for Workplace Assessor trainers in awareness raising of language and literacy issues involved in delivering the units Plan, Conduct and Review Assessment

How the materials are organised

Topics are selected to:

- make assessor training more accessible eg *reading skills*
- enable assessors to communicate effectively on the job eg *informing appropriate personnel, non verbal communication*
- provide extra assistance with communication skills needed to be competent in the units Plan, Conduct and Review Assessment eg *assessment information sessions, putting the candidate at ease, giving instructions, questioning techniques, seeking clarification, giving feedback, Plain English, writing feedback reports and recommendations*

The materials are 'stand alone', that is they can be used by trainers as presented, either as part of face-to-face delivery or distance learning. There are no extra trainer's notes as all background information and instructions are included. Symbols are used to denote whether the text is background information or a written or spoken activity.

Reading (background information)

Writing (activity)

Speaking (role play/discussion activity)

Answers

Answers provided are suggested responses and are particularly important if the resource is to be used as distance learning materials.

Alignment with Training Package for Assessment and Workplace Training

The following table indicates where the topics in *Communication Skills for Workplace Assessors* align with the units Plan, Conduct and Review Assessment (BSZ401A, BSZ402A, BSZ403A) from the Training Package for Assessment and Workplace Training.

Element	Unit	Topic in Communication Skills for Workplace Assessors
Plan Assessment BSZ401A	establish suitable assessment methods	• Questioning techniques
	develop assessment tools appropriate to a specific context	• Giving instructions • Questioning techniques • Plain English
Conduct Assessment BSZ402A	identify and explain the context of assessment	• Assessment information sessions • Putting the candidate at ease • Seeking clarification • Non verbal communication • Plain English
	organise assessment	• Putting candidate at ease • Giving instructions • Seeking clarification • Non-verbal communication • Plain English
	gather evidence	• Putting the candidate at ease • Giving Instructions • Questioning techniques • Seeking clarification • Non-verbal communication • Plain English
	provide feedback to persons being assessed	• Giving feedback
	record assessment results	• Writing feedback reports and recommendations
	report on conduct findings	• Writing feedback reports and recommendations
Review assessment BSZ403A	review the assessment procedures	• Informing appropriate personnel
	report review findings	• Writing feedback reports and recommendations

READING SKILLS

Skimming
Scanning
Reference skills

As an assessor you need to read many different types of documents, especially complex technical documents such as:

- competency standards
- standard operating procedures
- training manuals
- technical manuals
- policy documents
- texts used in assessor training

You may be an expert in your technical field but have difficulty in reading technical documents associated with your field of work.

Most people read in detail, that is they want to read every word. You often don't have time to read everything, just the relevant information. The skills in this unit will help you to:

- read a little faster
- find information without reading everything
- locate information quickly
- only read in detail the relevant information

Whenever you learn a new skill, for example operating a new machine, using the computer, or writing reports, you need to practise the new skill. Reading skills require the same practice, so don't worry if you can't do these activities the first time!

Skimming

What is it and when do we do it?

You are skimming when you look over a large piece of reading material to get a general idea of what it is about. For example you skim when you:

- first pick up a newspaper or magazine and flick through it before returning to parts that interest you
- look quickly through a book in a library or bookshop before deciding to borrow or buy it
- look at a notice board to see if there is anything of interest to you

Why skim?

You skim because you do not have the time or interest to read everything that comes before your eyes each day. Skimming helps you to choose to read only those things that interest you.

How to do it?

Move your eyes very quickly. Also use the 'clues' given by headings, bold print, italics, layout, pictures or in the first few lines. Don't read everything in detail.

Activity 1

Skim the Guidelines for Conducting Assessments taken from the Training Package for Assessment and Workplace Training BSZ98 on pages 8, 9 and 10.

Do not try and read every word, just skim the headings.

Give yourself 30 seconds. Then answer the questions.

1. What was the chapter heading? _____

2. (Circle) which of the following headings were in the section you read.

Technical principles of assessment	Flexibility
Designing assessment resources	Rules of evidence
Code of practice for assessors	Validity

3. Do you think this information would be useful for you? Why?

4. GUIDELINES FOR CONDUCTING ASSESMENTS

NATIONAL ASSESSMENT PRINCIPLES

State, Territory and Commonwealth Ministers, responsible for vocational education and training, have endorsed a set of National Assessment Principles. The principles provide the basis for the ongoing development of assessment systems and practices in vocational education and training. The Principles are summarised below:

Principle 1	Endorsed industry/enterprise standards form the basis of qualifications in the vocational education and training sector, where they exist.
Principle 2	Endorsed industry/enterprise standards are the benchmarks for assessment, where they exist.
Principle 3	Assessment conducted for the purposes of a national recognition should lead to a part or full qualification under the Australian Qualifications Framework.
Principle 4	Assessment should be undertaken by or quality endorsed by a Registered Training Organisation.
Principle 5	Assessment for national recognition purposes shall be conducted within a quality assurance framework.
Principle 6	Responsibility for assessment resides with the body that issues the qualification under the Australian Qualifications Framework.
Principle 7	Assessment process shall be valid, reliable, flexible and fair.
Principle 8	Assessment systems must incorporate mechanisms for recording, storing and accessing assessment outcomes.
Principle 9	Assessment reporting systems should indicate the units of competence that the individual has attained.
Principle 10	Assessment should incorporate ongoing monitoring and review processes.
Principle 11	Assessment processes shall provide for the recognition of current competencies regardless of where these have been acquired.

TECHNICAL PRINCIPLES FOR ASSESSMENT

The Assessment and Workplace Training Competency Standards are critical to the implementation of the National Assessment Principles, particularly Principle Seven. This principle is elaborated below.

Competency-based assessment is the process of collecting evidence and making judgements on whether or not competency has been achieved.

All assessment systems and registered training organisations are required to demonstrate compliance with the four technical principles of assessment:

- validity
- reliability
- flexibility
- fairness

These technical principles of assessment must be addressed in the conduct of an assessment, in the development of assessment tools, and in the design, establishment and management of the assessment system.

The technical assessment principles are elaborated below in the application of the Assessment and Workplace Training Competency Standards.

VALIDITY

A valid assessment assesses what it claims to assess; evidence collected is relevant to the activity and demonstrates that the performance criteria have been met.

The principles of assessment therefore must take into account several factors when applied to the Assessment and Workplace Training Competency Standards:

- Assessment against the units of competency contained in the Assessment and Workplace Training Competency Standards must cover the broad range of skills and knowledge.
- Assessment of the competencies in the Standards should integrate knowledge and skill with their practical application.
- Judgement made about competency against any of the units must be based on sufficient evidence. Evidence should be gathered on a number of occasions and in a range of contexts and using different assessment methods.

The validity of assessments can be enhanced when some or all of the factors below are applied:

- the assessment focuses on the appropriate areas of competence and skills
- a sufficient range of the performance of the person being assessed is sampled
- the assessment tasks resemble those encountered in the workplace
- evidence of performance is obtained after the assessment to support predictive validity
- evidence is gathered of transfer to new situations other than that used for assessment
- the assessment procedure documents the links to workplace performance
- multiple approaches to assessment are used
- the assessor can demonstrate how evidence of competency discriminates between unlike competencies and reinforces like competencies.

RELIABILITY

Reliability refers to the consistency of the interpretation of evidence and the assessment outcome. To make reliable assessments assessors must be competent in terms of their own assessor competencies, have the relevant technical competencies or have access to a subject matter expert who can advise the assessor on the relevant vocational competencies at least to the level being assessed.

Some or all of the following can enhance evidence of reliability:

- The criteria for the judgement of competence must be stated clearly and adhered to.
- Assessment practices in the assessment and training of persons with assessment responsibilities needs to be monitored and reviewed to ensure consistency of judgement.
- As a minimum requirement people assessing against the Assessment and Workplace Training Competency Standards must meet the qualifications for assessors as outlined in these Assessment Guidelines.

Applying the following practices enhances reliability:

- comparing the results of two or more assessors (moderation)
- collecting evidence via a number of different assessment methods
- collecting evidence across different locations and times
- providing clear and careful instructions when an employee is requested to monitor his/her own or other's behaviour (documentation)
- specifying clearly competencies to be attained (documentation)
- detailing clearly items on self/peer/supervisor assessment (documentation)

- taking care in the construction of assessment tools (systematic procedures)
- reviewing the training of assessors (systematic procedures).

Evidence of consistency can be obtained by assessing on multiple occasions, using a number of methods of gathering and in a range of contexts.

FLEXIBILITY

Flexibility in assessment allows for assessment either on or off the job and at mutually convenient times and situations.

- Assessment procedures should cover both on and off-the-job components of the Assessment and Workplace Training Competency Standards.
- There should be a process for people to seek recognition of their current competency in one or more of the units of competency in the Assessment and Workplace Training Competency Standards without having to participate in a training program.

To be flexible assessments should:

- cover both on and off-the-job components of training where applicable
- provide for the recognition of competencies no matter how, where or when they have been acquired, draw on a range of methods and be appropriate to the context, task and person
- be made accessible to the person(s) being assessed so that they can proceed readily from one competency standard to another.

Flexibility applies to the process – not the standard. Adjusting the standard beyond 'reasonable adjustment' can affect the validity of the assessment

FAIRNESS

A fair assessment will not disadvantage any person and will take into account the characteristics of the person being assessed. To maintain fairness:

- Reasonable adjustments are made to assessment procedures depending on the characteristics of the person being assessed.
- Assessment procedures and the evidence (whether product or process) must be made clear.
- A consultative approach to assessment of competency against one or all of the units in the Standards is recommended.
- Persons being assessed against the Assessment and Workplace Training Competency Standards must have the opportunity for a review and an appeal of assessment decisions.

To be fair, an assessment should:

- help the person being assessed understand clearly what is expected and what form the assessment will take
- ensure that the assessment procedure supports the identification of training needs
- be equitable to all groups of people being assessed (make reasonable adjustments to the methods used for collecting evidence depending on the characteristics of the person(s) being assessed)
- have criteria for judging performance that are made clear to all those seeking assessment
- involve a participatory approach to assessment that is agreed to by the assessor and the person being assessed
- provide opportunities that allow the person(s) being assessed to challenge assessments and with provision for reassessment.

Source: *Training Package for Assessment and Workplace Training* BSZ98 Business Services Australia ANTA 1998

Scanning

What is it and when do we do it?

You are scanning when you read to find an answer to a particular question. You scan, for example, when you:

- use an index to find what you want
- look up the TV program to find what's on at 9 o'clock
- look quickly through a news article to find out where it happened
- look at a notice to find out when the meeting will be held

Why scan?

You scan because sometimes you are only interested in finding the answers to your questions, as quickly and as easily as possible. You are not interested in reading the whole text.

How to do it?

You usually know what you are looking for. Move your eyes quickly to find the parts you are looking for and ignore the rest. Stop and read more carefully the part that might answer your question.

Activity 2

You are an assessor in the Security Industry and are using the Training Package for Asset Security. You want to find out how often you should conduct assessments.

1. Scan the following 4 pages (12,13,14,15) from the Security Industry Training Package until you have found the correct section. Give yourself 30 seconds.

2. Read the information in detail, then answer this question.

   Who decides how many assessments the candidate should have?

   _____

   _____

➢ Validation of assessment materials

All assessment instruments should be validated. This validation should include Input from industry and enterprise end-users likely to be affected by the assessment instruments.

Validation trials should ensure that the material is reliable and able to produce valid and consistent outcomes consistent with the outcomes described in the standards. Validations should, where possible, involve workplace based trials.

➢ An agreed process of review to ensure the valid and reliable use of the assessment resources

This may include assessment audits or other forms of appraisal designed to evaluate the consistency of assessment outcomes achieved through the use of the instruments.

Guidelines for conducting assessments

The following principles provide a guide to conducting assessments in the sectors covered by this package:

- Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) are responsible for the quality of assessment and certification of assessment outcomes. RTOs should ensure that procedures are equitable, assessable, transparent and deliver consistency.
- Assessment and recognition procedures should be valid and reliable.
- English language should only be assessed where it is required for occupational, education and training, public health or safety reasons. Where fluency in the use of English as a language is assessed for employment purposes, assessment should be in terms of functional literacy.
- Applicants should be informed of all requirements and processes relating to assessment and recognition in advance of the assessment event.
- On completion of assessment or recognition procedures, applicants should be provided with an objective statement, preferably in writing, explaining the result.
- Opportunities for appeal or review of assessment should be a condition of registration of providers.
- Information on appeals processes should be provided by an RTO to its client(s) and be explained and understood by the client before assessments are undertaken.

Assessments can be undertaken in a variety of ways for example:

- Against learning outcomes — formative assessment. This type of assessment is usually supervised by an experienced/ competent trainer/ assessor and is directly related to a structured course of study. Further on-the-job assessment may be required before competency is recognised. Where assessment on-the-job is not possible, perhaps because the functions described in the standards are not a normal part of the individual's current job, arrangements for job rotation or simulated learning may be required.
- Against competency standards — summative assessment. This type of assessment is undertaken on completion of a structured course which includes work experience. The assessment is conducted by a person who has not been directly involved in the learning process. The assessment integrates assessment against learning outcomes with assessment of performance against endorsed standards.
- In the workplace alone, assessment may be undertaken against competency standards as part of ongoing assessment or self-paced assessment.

It may be that not all assessment will involve observation of performance. In some cases, competency may be able to be inferred from evidence derived from current or past work experience. In other cases, the competencies required may be beyond those that can be routinely demonstrated within an individual's job, and flexible assessment opportunities such as job rotation may be required.

7.1 Planning assessments

A key feature of the new system is the need to balance quality and quantity of training and assessment.

Quantity

The quantity of training required for a candidate to achieve an outcome at either the unit or qualification level is addressed through the preliminary evaluation of a candidate's current competency.

This evaluation may be undertaken by the candidate, or the candidate in association with a supervisor or workplace mentor. It does not constitute a formal assessment or performance appraisal, but rather is used to identify existing knowledge and skill levels in relation to the candidate's job function and current or future career path.

The information derived from self-assessment is useful insofar as it allows an accurate, relevant and reliable training and assessment plan to be negotiated with the employer and RTO.

Having agreed on the candidate's level of current competency against the relevant industry unit standards, an individual education and training plan may be negotiated and implemented.

Quality

Assessment serves a second, important purpose in the model adopted by the industry It allows quality (i.e. relevance to the end-user) of training outcomes to be evaluated. This is achieved by correlating time, effort and resources required for training and assessment with evidence of performance outcomes.

By linking assessment directly to outcomes described in standards, people affected by the process have an opportunity to evaluate the quality of training services provided against accepted criteria for evaluating performance on the job.

The process brings training, assessment and recognition into line with relevant individual, industry and enterprise performance needs.

7.1.1 Selection of units (career planning)

The model adopted by the industry avoids the use of co and pre-requisite groupings of units.

The selection of units for assessment and the sequencing of training and assessments, especially where these form part of a formal course of study, are matters which need to be carefully negotiated with the RTO at an enterprise level. In this case, assessors need to take the industry packaging advice in the Qualifications section of these guidelines into account.

Units defined as core units provide common ground across the industry for training, assessment and recognition activities. Elective units take into account individual or enterprise variations and requirements and provide for flexibility in course design, delivery, and assessment.

Various combinations of core and elective units may be required depending on the particular occupational or service niche occupied by the candidate. Information on these aspects of the industry is provided in the standards and in career planning resources in the training package.

7.1.2 Assessment or underpinning knowledge and skill

In the context of occupational competence, knowledge, understanding and associated cognitive skills are part of performance, not something apart from it. While evidence of knowledge and understanding can be collected or inferred from formal written or oral tests, these are not the only ways of generating such evidence. Nor are they necessarily the most appropriate ways of checking the acquisition of knowledge and skill.

Knowledge is about understanding what should be done, how and perhaps where and when it should be done — and what should be done if circumstances change. Evidence of knowledge and understanding may be drawn from performance, for example through:

- observing an activity

- examining products and outcomes of activity
- looking at written or visual records
- reviewing third party testimony
- questioning candidates in relation to specific tasks and more broadly about principles or consequences of various actions

Sensible approaches to assessment are likely to use a balance of performance and knowledge evidence in arriving at a decision about an individual's current competence.

How this evidence is collected and assessed will need to be sufficiently cost-effective to fit within funding formulas, but sufficiently rigorous to ensure that assessment records are valid, reliable and have currency in the (whole) education system.

7.1.3 Frequency of Assessments

Formal assessment of competency should occur when the candidate is fully ready for such assessment. Reaching a decision on readiness and frequency of assessment is a matter for negotiation between the candidate, the RTO, employer and other relevant parties to the training and assessment contract.

Some parties might agree on a form of continuous on-the-job performance appraisal culminating in regularly sequenced assessments against groups of units; others may prefer assessments against individual units at pre-agreed times, others may wish to consider variations on this approach.

7.1.4 Evidence of competency

The system devised by the industry provides a series of signposts to help in the collection of evidence for assessment purposes. Assessment record books enable the recording of assessments and assessment outcomes. The record books and associated portfolios of information, will provide evidence of competency to support a candidate's claim for recognition by way of either a Statement of Attainment, or a qualification at a given level of the AQF.

The industry has not considered a formal skills passport and will, for the foreseeable future, rely on assessment record books and credentials issued by RTOs as evidence of competency.

7.2 Factors to consider in planning Assessments

- Within a structured program of training eg New Traineeships the options available to trainees undertaking assessments as part of a New Traineeship may be defined by the contract of employment/learning.

- Career path options for further acquisition of industry recognised qualifications may be restricted by Regulations administered by a second Government Agency. In most jurisdictions licensing or regulatory arrangements which restrict entry to employment are under review. The extent to which Regulations impact on entry-level training may vary between States. Assessors should consider local as well as national requirements when assessing underpinning knowledge.

- Extent of integration of on and off-the-job training and the quality of curricula. Some providers continue to offer curriculum based courses which focus on off-the-job training. In this case, special arrangements will need to be negotiated to ensure an integration of off-the-job learning and relevant work experience in order to provide a relevant and accurate assessment of competency.

- The use of simulated work environments is acceptable. However, such environments should replicate to the greatest extent possible the variety of factors which affect performance. Assessment of competency in simulated work environments should ensure that the four components of competency, including the ability to deal with contingencies and to transfer competence from one work environment to another, is addressed.

- Quality and the extent of supervision required. Poor or inconsistent supervision in the workplace may have an adverse effect on performance. Planning of assessments needs to ensure that relevant quality auditing and supervision support is guaranteed in advance of assessments being done. Where necessary, external support services and monitoring may need to be arranged.

- Mechanisms for resolving disputes in relation to the employment/ training/ assessment contract need to be clearly discussed and agreed with all relevant parties as part of the planning process. The assessment process provides an opportunity for the effectiveness of training/assessment to be evaluated. This opportunity should be considered as part of the planning and evaluation process.

Work-based assessment of trainees who are not employees

The trainee-as-student refers to the situation where a full-time or part-time student is undertaking vocational placement as an integral part of their learning program. In this situation, issues which need to be addressed include:

- evidence that persons with whom the trainee is placed hold the required masters/occupational licences
- length of work placement
- existence of a structured training plan which integrates the work placement with the student's study program
- a formal statement of the student and employer expectations of outcomes from the work placement
- insurance and protection of the learner while on work placement
- feedback on the value of the placement in relation to the expectations of the parties who negotiated the placement
- in licensed areas, the principal employer may need to hold an appropriate licence and be directly involved in the supervision and assessment of the candidate.

7.2.2 Work-based assessment of trainees who are employees of Group Training Companies

Trainees employed by Group Training Companies undertake paid work as part of their overall course of study. Issues which need to be addressed in planning assessments include:

- evidence that persons with whom the trainee is placed hold the required masters/ occupational licences
- length of work placement
- existence of a structured training plan which integrates the work placement with the student's study program
- formal statement of the student and employer expectations of outcomes from the work placement
- feedback on the value of the placement in relation to the expectations of the parties who negotiated the placement
- in licensed areas, the principal employer may need to hold an appropriate licence and be directly involved in the supervision and assessment of the candidate.

Industry Regulation

People employed in providing services described in these standards are exposed to levels of risk which can be minimized through training and protective strategies. Training in all areas of the Security and Investigative Services Industry is mandated by law — including in the area of occupational health and safety.

However, regulation of various areas in the industry occurs in a variety of ways, including by way of business and occupational licensing. These licences and the prescribed training that goes with them may vary from State to State. Mutual Recognition does not apply in the area of licensing of Firearms use.

Peak industry associations, including the Australian Security Industry Association Ltd (ASIAL), the American Society for Industrial Security (ASIS) and the Liquor, Hospitality and Miscellaneous Workers Union (LHMU) have introduced elements of self-regulation and quality assurance to the industry.

Source: PRS98 Training Package for Asset Security Property Services Training Australia ANTA 1998

Reference skills

What are they and when do we use them?

You use reference skills when you need to find information quickly.
Reference skills are:

- finding information ordered alphabetically
- using a table of contents
- using an index
- using an appendix
- using a glossary
- reading and locating information through paragraph numbering

Why do we use them?

It would take forever to flip through a complex document unless we used these skills to locate the information quickly.

How to use them?

This will be explained in each section.

20

Alphabetical ordering

What is it and when and how do we use it?

Alphabetical ordering arranges words according to the alphabet, that is A words come before B words etc, for example:

Assessor
Benchmark
Competency
Deliver
Experience
Framework
Guidelines .....and so on

However, if two words begin with the same letter, they are ordered according to the second letter, for example:

Arrangements
Assessor
Benchmark
Bilingual
Characteristics
Competency
Deliver
Diploma

The same applies if the first two or three letters are the same, for example:

Assessor
Assistance
Basic
Battery
Competency
Consistency

We use alphabetical ordering when we need to look up an index, a word in a dictionary or find the meaning of a word in a glossary.

Activity 3

1. Arrange these words in alphabetical order.

activities evidence validity reliability assessor holistic criteria performance adjustments assessments flexible cost-effective fair sufficient ratify evaluation relevant participants competencies

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____

2. Scan the Index on page 19 to find the page numbers for these topics. Give yourself 60 seconds.

Audience _____

Computer in libraries _____

Feedback _____

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Table of contents

What is it?

A table of contents lists chapter or section headings and appendices plus page numbers. It is found at the front of a book. Some tables of contents are more detailed than others.

How to use it?

Skim the document until you find the table of contents, then scan the table of contents until you find the chapter heading you want. Finally turn to the correct page in the document.

Activity 4

Read the table of contents on the following page and answer these questions.

1. How many sections are there in the Training Package?

   _____

2. How many appendices (appendix = 1, appendices = two or more) are there in the Training Package?

   _____

3. Which is the longest section in the Training Package?

   _____

4. On which page would you find information on:

   Assessor qualifications _____

   New traineeships _____

   AQF level descriptors _____

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Source: *PRS98 Training Package for Asset Security* Property Services Training Australia ANTA 1998

Index

What is it and when do we use it?

An index lists topics and is ordered alphabetically. It gives specific page numbers and is usually found at the back of a book. You use it when you need to find information on a specific topic rather than general information which would be listed under a heading in the table of contents.

How to use it?

Think of a specific topic area that you need information on eg *danger tags* in the index on page 24. Scan the index until you find the correct alphabetical group eg D. Find the words *danger tags* then find out on which page or pages you will find the information. Turn to the relevant pages.

Activity 5

1. Read the index on page 19. Answer the following questions.

   a) On which pages would you find this information:

   agenda _____

   capital letters _____

   feedback _____

   group discussion _____

   b) Where else would you look to find information on:

   agenda _____

   body language _____

   dress _____

   c) Where would you find information on:

   barriers to listening _____

   diagrams in notes _____

2. Read the index for Energy Australia's Electrical Safety Rules on page 24.

   a) What is the main difference between the Index on page 19 and the Index on page 24?

   _____

   _____

   b) Where would you find information on:

   basic safety principles _____

   safety clothing _____

   danger tags _____

As you have probably discovered, the Electrical Safety Rules index is a Cross Referencing Index, that is, it gives the clause number **and** the page number. This document is a legal document and each clause relates to a specific work practice.

Cross Referencing Index

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Danger of Induced Voltages	6.25	51
Danger Tags	6.18	46
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Cancelling Disconnection and Reconnection Requests	11.2	96
Disconnection using a Restricted Operating Authority	11.4	97
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Source: *Electrical Safety Rules* Energy Australia 1998

Appendices (Appendix)

What are they?

Appendices are found at the back of a book and give extra useful information. The appendices are tools you need to apply the information in the book or are examples of documents referred to throughout the book. They are ordered alphabetically.

How to use them?

Find the table of contents. It will list the page number of the appendices. Turn to the appendix that has your information.

Activity 6

Read the table of contents on page 21.

How many appendices are there in this Training Package?

_____

Activity 7

Find the table of contents of a large document you use in your area of work, for example a Safety Rules Manual, a policy handbook or a training package.

1. Write down how many appendices are in the book.

_____

2. What is each appendix? (eg an example of a document, legal information etc)

_____

_____

_____

Glossary

What is it and when do we use it?

A glossary is a list of technical words with a definition for each word. It is arranged in alphabetical order like a dictionary. You use it when you need to find the meaning of a technical word, term (eg *stand-by person, holistic assessment*) or an acronym (TAFE - **T**echnical and **F**urther **E**ducation). A glossary can be found at the beginning or end of a document.

How to use it?

Use the skill of finding information in alphabetical order to locate the definition you need.

Activity 8

Use the glossary on assessment terminology on page 104-108 and answer the following questions.

1. What does AQF stand for?

   _____

2. What term comes before Quality Assurance?

   _____

3. What does reliability mean?

   _____

   _____

   _____

Paragraph/Clause numbering

What is it and when do we use it?

Paragraph or clause numbering is **not** a decimal counting system. It orders information into headings and subheadings. You use it when you need to find the information in a document and you know what the clause number is. For example:

See Clause 6.6.1 on Special Requirements for Unauthorised People

It is usually used in large technical documents in fields where work practices have been legislated eg the Electricity Industry.

Why use it?

It allows you to find the information quickly without having to look up a table of contents or index again. Look at the following list of headings and subheadings to see how information is organised with paragraph numbering.

4	**Heading**	**4**	**Safety Equipment, Clothing and Material**
4.1	**Subheading**	**4.1**	**Safety Equipment and Other Tools**
4.1.1	*Sub-subheading*	*4.1.1*	*Safety Belts and Harnesses*
4.1.2	*Sub-subheading*	*4.1.2*	*Insulating Gloves*
4.2	**Subheading**	**4.2**	**Checking Safety Equipment**
4.3	**Subheading**	**4.3**	**Safety Clothing**
4.3.1	*Sub-subheading*	*4.3.1*	*Site Visitor Safety Clothing*

Activity 9

1. Scan the text General Provisions for Electrical Safety Rules on page 29 and answer the question.

   Which paragraph numbers relate to these headings?

   Reporting Dangerous Conditions _____

   General Provisions _____

   Low Voltage _____

   Basic Safety Principles _____

   High Voltage _____

2. Imagine these were paragraph numbers in a text. Arrange them in the correct order.

   6.5.3 _____

   6.6 _____

   6.5 _____

   6.7 _____

   6.5.2 _____

   6.6.1 _____

   6.5.1 _____

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Electrical Safety Rules
General Provisions 6

6 General Provisions

This section provides a list of general safety principles for work situations in Energy Australia.

6.1 Basic Safety Principles

The following two Basic Safety Principles apply to low voltage work and high voltage work.

6.1.1 Low Voltage

All low voltage exposed mains and apparatus must be treated as alive until they are isolated and proved de-energised.

6.1.2 High Voltage

All high voltage exposed mains and apparatus must be treated as alive until they are isolated, proved de-energised, earthed and short-circuited.

6.2 Reporting Dangerous Conditions

When you find mains and apparatus which may be alive, such as fallen mains, and which are a danger to people in a public place, you must:

- remain close to, but well clear of, the mains and apparatus to warn people until the danger has been removed; or
- arrange for another responsible person to remain close to, but well clear of, the mains and apparatus.

Then you must:

- telephone the appropriate System/Area Operator; or
- report the matter to the Employees' Wires Down telephone number; or
- report the matter to Energy/Australia's Hazard Line telephone number; or
- arrange for someone to make the telephone call for you.

Source: *Electrical Safety Rules* Energy Australia 1998

INFORMING APPROPRIATE PERSONNEL

An example of negotiation
Some assertiveness techniques
Presenting your case in terms of others' needs
Creatively solving a problem
Other language skills in the negotiation process
Roleplay

In your role as an assessor you need to inform appropriate personnel about suitable arrangements for the assessment, specific methods of assessment and report on the conduct of the assessment.

You may need to talk to:

- other assessors
- candidates
- employee/union representatives
- consultative committees
- training providers personnel, human resources etc
- training and assessment co-ordinators
- managers, supervisors
- technical specialists

In the planning and conducting phase it is likely that you will need to have face-to-face discussions with appropriate personnel. Be prepared for the fact that not everyone will agree with your point of view! In the review phase of the assessment this process is more likely to be in written form.

An example of negotiation

Read the scenario below and the dialogue on the following page.

Scenario:

An assessor is informing a group of supervisors that assessments will take place in three weeks and over a period of a week. There will be two assessors and they hope to assess two people per day. The assessor would like to organise a timetable with the supervisors to make sure that the assessments run smoothly. He would also like to explain the assessment process. The supervisors are under extreme pressure to meet production deadlines, are short staffed and say they can't release a number of workers in one week.

You will note that the dialogue is in two columns - *Interaction* and *Function*. *Interaction* is what they actually say and *Function* means what they are doing, for example actively listening. For each interaction look at the function. You will be writing a similar dialogue in a later activity.

Dialogue 1

A = Assessor S1,2,3 = Supervisor 1, 2, 3

	Interaction	Function
A	*OK, thanks for coming everyone. Firstly I'd like to tell you about the assessments we will be conducting in three weeks time, then arrange a timetable so it fits in with your schedules.*	Establish empathy ie make them welcome and give them time to 'tune in'.
A	*As you know we will be assessing 8 of your staff on Module 4 of Certificate I level which is the unit on OH&S. We will be doing observations of their actual work and asking them questions so we'll need them for 2 hours each.*	Make an assertive statement ie say what is happening.
S1	*A couple of hours - you mean all those people will be off work for a couple of hours each day. We are really short staffed... we can't possibly release those people for that amount of time.*	Active listening - let the other person express their concerns without interrupting them.
A	*I realise you are short staffed and your workloads are heavy but these assessments were scheduled months ago and we can't really change them now.*	Use an assertive technique - show that you are listening and understand but still state your case.
S2	*Nobody told us - we're the ones who have to make up the work!*	Active listening.
A	*Yeah, look I understand that it is really difficult for you guys. However there have been a lot of accidents in your section and the assessments will help us find out if the new workers are doing the right thing.*	Assertive technique - show that you are listening and understand but this time state your case in terms of their need.
S3	*We already know who's making the mistakes!*	Active listening.
A	*Yeah I know that some of you think this is all a waste of time but when we find out who doesn't really understand the correct safety procedures, they can be trained - without having to run a training course for everybody.*	Assertive technique - show that you are listening and understand and still state your case in terms of their need.
S1	*I suppose that'll save some time.*	Active listening.
A	*How would be the best way to organise the assessments? There'll be two of us so we'll need 4 people per day and later in the week we'll be here to reassess if it's needed.*	Creative solution - ask an open question.
S2	*OK you can start with my blokes.....*	
A	*Thanks I really appreciate the support .....*	Expression of thanks.

Activity 1

Dialogue 2

Scenario:

An assessor is informing a group of supervisors about the need to do actual observations as part of the assessment process. It is a safety critical industry and the supervisors don't think observations are necessary. They prefer simulations for apprentices because of the risks involved

Fill in the function column based on the functions listed on the previous page. The first one has been done for you.

	Interaction	Function
A	*OK, thanks for coming everyone. I know you are all really busy so I'll be brief. As you know we will be assessing here next week and we will need to do direct observations as part of the assessment.*	Establish empathy. Show understanding. Assertive statement.
S1	*No we can't do that it's too dangerous. I'm not having those apprentices doing that, it's just too dangerous.*	
A	*I realise that you are concerned about safety. However we do need to do some direct observations together with simulations. All safety precautions will be in place and there'll be two assessors.*	
S2	*No we've tried that before and it was disastrous.*	
A	*Yeah I appreciate that you're concerned but we must do these observations as well as the simulations. We are aware of all the safety precautions and this time we have two assessors.*	
S1	*Why can't you just do the simulations, it really is too dangerous we have had accidents before. Then it comes back on us.*	
A	*Yeah I know it must be frustrating if you get the blame for someone else's mistakes but this time we have changed the procedure, that's why we have two assessors. If it looks dangerous we will stop the assessment and I assure you nobody here will be responsible.*	
A	*I was wondering if you blokes could tell me what do you think are the things we need to look out for?*	

Some assertive techniques

The reason for using assertive techniques is to **respond** and not **react,** that is to use communication skills to solve the problem rather than becoming defensive (aggressive) or being intimidated by angry responses or differences of opinion (passive).

In Dialogues 1 and 2, the assessor used two assertive strategies:

1. The assessors made assertive statements - the assessors said what they wanted to happen.
   - *We will be doing observations of their actual work and asking them questions so we will need them for two hours each.*
   - *We will need to do direct observations as part of the assessment.*
2. The assessors showed that they were listening and understanding, then stated what they wanted with a contrasting statement. These parts are usually linked by *but* or *however*.

Linking word 'but'

Show listening and understanding

I realise that you are short staffed and that your workloads are heavy but these assessments were scheduled months ago and we can't really change them now.

Contrasting statement

Activity 2

In the following statements underline the section that shows listening and understanding, circle the section that is a contrasting statement and highlight the linking word.

1. *I understand that it is really difficult. However there have been a lot of accidents in your section and the assessments will help us find out if the new workers are doing the right thing.*

2. *Yeah I know that some of you think it is a waste of time but when we find out who doesn't really understand the safety procedures, they can be trained....*

3. *I appreciate that you're concerned but we must do these observations together with the simulations.*

4. *I know it must be frustrating for you if you get the blame for someone else's mistakes but this time we have changed the procedure, that's why we have two assessors.*

Another assertive strategy is to use the 'broken record technique', that is simply repeat the message until the other person becomes less defensive and finally responds.

Activity 3

In Dialogue 2 on page 33, underline where the assessor used the broken record technique.

Presenting your case in terms of others' needs

Before you go into a session where you know that there will be conflict, prepare your ideas and especially how the assessment will benefit those who are concerned, that is present your case in terms of their needs.

Activity 4

In Dialogue 1 on page 32, how did the assessor present the case in terms of the supervisors' needs?

Creatively solving problems

When trying to solve a problem a co-operative approach is an effective way to identify a creative solution that will satisfy everybody. Listed below are three techniques that can be used, with examples of appropriate expressions.

Share the problem

What do you think needs to be done here?

Let's work on this together.

Uncover needs

What are your main concerns?

How many.....?

Identify creative solutions

What if we.....

If we did it this way....would that solve the problem?

Activity 5

Place these expressions under the correct techniques in the boxes above.

What about.....?
How could we solve this problem?
How will this affect your section?
How about.....?
Is there a way.....?
What do you need to make it work smoothly?

Activity 6

Go to Dialogues 1 and 2 and highlight where the above techniques were used.

Other language skills in the negotiation process

Some language skills that could be used in the negotiation process are listed below. Underneath each skill are examples of language used with these skills.

Agreeing
Yes, I agree with that...
Yeah I agree.
I completely agree with you.
Absolutely!
Exactly.

Interrupting
Could I say something at this point.
Sorry, before you go on, could I....?
If I could interrupt you for a second.

Disagreeing
No, I disagree with...
No, I don't agree....
Sorry, I don't agree with...

Putting an opposing view point
Yes but...
However...
Don't forget...

Giving Opinions
I believe that....
I feel that....
In my opinion...
I think (that)....

Showing uncertainty
I'm not so sure...
Look it's a good idea but...
I need more time to think about it...
Mmmm maybe...

Activity 7

Look at the following responses people have made in various discussions. When do you think they would have been used in a discussion?

Put them in the appropriate language skills boxes on the previous page.

Look, it's a good idea. But I'm just a bit concerned about...
But what about...
I don't agree...
Do you think?... I'm not sure...
I don't know. I see what you mean but...
I'm not for a moment saying you're wrong, but...
I've got some problems....
Sorry, before you go on could I.....
Don't forget that.....

Adapted from: Slade, D et al *Appropriate Responses Team Work* 1994 NLLIA Centre for Workplace Communication and Culture.

Activity 8

With a colleague have a discussion on the following topic. Try to use as many language skills as possible eg giving opinions, showing uncertainty.

Topic

Argument A Assessment is a valuable learning tool in the workplace.

Argument B Assessment is a waste of time, money and decreases production.

Roleplay

Activity 9

Read the following scenario.

Scenario:

Susie is a cleaner who was assessed as not yet competent when trying to obtain her Forklift Licence. Her theory was fine, she just needed a little more practice especially in reversing. The assessor wants to reassess Susie but first she needs more practice either with the supervisor or another trainer.* The workload is heavy and the supervisor cannot release her to practise any longer.

*Note: Assessors who are assessing a Workcover ticket usually cannot train the person they are assessing.

Complete the dialogue on the following page. Use the information given in the scenario.

Roleplay the dialogue with a colleague. Discuss your answers with your trainer.

Dialogue 3

	Interaction	Function
A		Establish empathy. Request for time to talk.
S	*Yeah what is it mate?*	
A		Assertive statement - say what you want.
S	*Sorry, impossible. We are short staffed and there are two more going on leave next week. I just can't spare her.*	
A		Show understanding but give contrasting assertive statement.
S	*I really can't spare her during the week but I can't stop her from going for her licence.*	
A		Show listening and understanding and contrasting statement presenting the case in terms of the supervisor's needs.
S	*I don't know maybe she could change her shift. Can the trainer come for the afternoon shift? It's too busy in the morning.*	
A		Agreement, time for further arrangements and thanks.
S	*OK I'll see what I can do - see you next week.*	

ASSESSMENT INFORMATION SESSIONS

Guidelines on how to give information
Roleplay
Information session checklist

In an assessment information session the candidate needs to be fully informed of:

- the assessment process
- relevant workplace assessment policies
- the context of the assessment
- the purpose of the assessment
- the possible outcomes of the assessment
- who will be assessing them
- when they will be assessed
- how they will be assessed
- the standards against which they are being assessed
- their rights
- the appeals process

The type and amount of information you give will also depend on the assessment policy under which you are working, the characteristics of the group or individuals you are addressing and their knowledge about the assessment process.

A successful information session not only depends on **what** information you give but **how** you give that information.

Guidelines on how to give information

Read these guidelines and try to apply as many as you can during the roleplay.

- Explain technical terms and concepts associated with assessment eg:

  competency, competency standards, confidentiality, appeals process, evidence

- Illustrate concepts by referring to real examples eg:

  Have copies of the relevant standards, assessment policy, appeals policy etc.

  Give people time to read these. Explain if necessary. Give examples of types of evidence to be collected.

- Provide written information in Plain English in advance.
- Allow sufficient time for the information session.
- Ensure that people are at ease and can see and hear you (if it is a large group).
- Indicate that questions are welcome to ensure that everyone understands what is happening.
- Check for understanding frequently.
- Clearly state the *purpose* of the information session.
- Indicate what you are going to talk about first eg:

  Firstly...
  To begin with...
  To start off...

- Organise your information logically eg:

  Firstly, secondly, in addition (signals addition)
  Next, after that (signals time)
  Because, since as, (signals reason)
  Therefore, as a result, consequently (signals result/effect)
  But, however, although, yet, on the other hand (signals contrast)
  For example, for instance (signals exemplification, that is giving examples)
  Similarly, likewise, equally (signals comparison)
  Finally, lastly, in conclusion (signals summary)

- Give information in small chunks and invite questions after each chunk.

- Indicate when you are going to change topics:

  OK, so that's why the assessment is taking place. Are there any questions?..... Now I'd like to explain the assessment process, that is, what will happen during and after the assessment.

- Avoid slang and idiomatic expressions.

- Be available after the session to answer questions and concerns privately.

Adapted from: O'Grady & Honeywill *Integrating Cross Cultural Knowledge and Skills into Workplace Assessor Training* ANTA NSW DET 1998.

Roleplay

Activity 1

Prepare an information session on the assessment process in your area of expertise.

Decide if it will be a large group or one-to-one and who your audience will be eg:

- candidates who are familiar with the assessment process
- candidates who have never been assessed before
- candidates who have low language skills

In groups of three deliver the information session. A delivers. B listens and responds. C assesses using the checklist on the following page. Rotate roles.

Even though this is an activity on how to give information, check with your trainer to make sure you are covering all the information that is required in an information session.

Information session checklist

Did your colleague	✓ ✗	Comment
explain technical terms and concepts?		
illustrate concepts by referring to real examples?		
provide written information in Plain English?		
allow sufficient time for the information session?		
ensure that people were at ease and could see and hear them?		
indicate that questions were welcome and ensure that everyone knew what was happening?		
check for understanding frequently?		
clearly state the purpose of the information session?		
indicate what they talked about first?		
organise their information logically?		
give information in small chunks and invite questions after each chunk?		
indicate when they changed topics?		
avoid slang and idiomatic expressions?		
make themselves available after the information session to answer questions and concerns privately?		

PUTTING THE CANDIDATE AT EASE

Guidelines on how to put the candidate at ease
Roleplay
Putting the candidate at ease checklist

Before the assessment begins, the candidate is likely to be very nervous so you need to reassure them and put them at ease.

Assessment is also a cultural practice and in a culturally diverse workplace it cannot be taken for granted that people will see assessment in the same light. In this case it is essential to try to put the candidate at ease.

Guidelines on how to put the candidate at ease

Read these guidelines and try to apply as many as you can during the roleplay.

- Greet and welcome them. Remember to make eye contact and smile.
- Chat about something unrelated to the assessment for a moment.
- Use language, which brings people together eg:

  first names, 'we', 'as you know'
- Use body language appropriate to the situation eg:

  keeping appropriate distance, sitting or standing, behind/ next to a desk/ no desk, eye contact etc
- Give a brief overview of the assessment process in terms that are easily understood.
- Tell the person being assessed how long the assessment should take.
- Invite them to ask questions eg:

  Sometimes I am not clear, please.....
  Please stop me at any time to ask questions.
  You can stop me at any time to check.
- Tell them when the assessment is about to begin.

Roleplay

Activity 1

In groups of three, roleplay putting a candidate at ease before an assessment begins. A is the assessor. B is being assessed. C completes the checklist. Rotate roles.

Putting the candidate at ease checklist

Did your colleague	✓ ✗	Comment
greet and welcome the candidate and smile and make eye contact?		
chat about something unrelated to the assessment for a moment?		
use language which brings people together?		
use body language appropriate to the situation?		
give a brief overview of the assessment process in terms that were easily understood?		
tell the candidate how long the assessment should take?		
invite the candidate to ask questions?		
tell the candidate when the assessment began?		

GIVING INSTRUCTIONS

Guidelines on how to give instructions
Roleplay
Giving instructions checklist

You have given a successful information session so all the candidates and other appropriate personnel are well informed of the assessment process. On the day of the assessment you have put the candidate at ease so you are both feeling comfortable with the process. Now you need to give instructions on what to do so the evidence you gather will be valid and sufficient.

It is important that you give clear and concise instructions so that the candidate knows exactly what needs to be done during the assessment.

Guidelines on how to give instructions

Activity 1

Read this scenario and answer the question.

Scenario:

The assessor has given a clear and concise information session and has put the candidate at ease by establishing good rapport. Then, when the actual assessment began the assessor started to give the instructions. He then realised that he had forgotten some important information and backtracked and started again. He asked if the candidate understood and she said *yes*. However, she looked a little confused and began the procedure by not doing an important pre-check.

Why was the candidate confused?

On the following page are some suggestions on how to give instructions.

Suggestions on how to give instructions:

- Before you start, think about what you want the candidate to do.
- Give instructions in the order you want the person to do the task eg:

  First, I want you to do a pre-op check then tell me how you would plan your work...
- Make the instructions short and to the point eg:

  Show me how you do the pre-op checks.
  Set the grader up to do the job.
- Don't backtrack - it can be confusing eg:

  Oh sorry I forgot, before you do that I want you to .....
- Put the action word at the beginning of the sentence, it makes the instruction easier to understand eg:

  ***Do** all the pre-op checks*
  ***Place** the pallet down.*

Source: Jenny Kerr *Effective Communication for Assessment in the Quarry Industry* ANTA 1999

Activity 2

1. Highlight the words that indicate the order of the instruction:

OK the first thing I want you to do is demonstrate a full pre-op check on the machine... and the second thing will be to explain to me how you would plan your work.... After that I want you to check the controls and equipment....then finally shift the load.

2. Underline the action word:

OK. Could you pick up that pallet of goods...Move it around to the left side of the truck and place the pallet down on the truck in the centre.....Manoeuvre the forklift to the right side of the truck...Remove the pallet and place it back where you started.

Roleplay

Activity 3

In your area of expertise think of two or three different assessments you would be conducting.

In groups of three, roleplay giving these instructions. A is the assessor, B is the candidate and C completes the checklist on the following page. Rotate roles.

To help you prepare for the roleplay, first, write down your (spoken) instructions.

Giving instructions checklist

Did your colleague	✓ ✗	Comment
have the instructions planned before asking the candidate?		
give the instructions in the order they wanted the task done?		
make the instructions short and to the point?		
backtrack?		
put the action word at the beginning?		

QUESTIONING TECHNIQUES

Types of questions
Questions to avoid
Question scenarios
Starting a question bank

As a workplace assessor you must gather evidence to judge levels of competence against competency standards. One of the methods to gather evidence is to use direct questioning. The way you ask questions can determine the amount and the quality of information received.

Types of questions

There are two main types of questions - closed and open. Different types of open questions can get different types of information. The following table illustrates when to use open and closed questions, listing examples for each type.

Type of question	When to use	Example
Closed questions	• When a 'yes' or 'no' or a short answer is enough.	- *Have you ever had an emergency situation?* - *Do you know how to operate this machine?*
	• To assess specific knowledge or facts.	- *What would you use to undo a core barrel?* - *Could you tell me the name of the software that you use?*
Open questions	• To assess underpinning knowledge.	- *How would you make sure that all your employees understand the safety regulations?* - *What are some of the safety hazards on drill sites?*
	• To explore opinions, encourage feedback.	- *What actions have you taken to establish relations with key people?*
	• When more complex information and explanations are needed.	- *What things do you need to think about before you start...?*

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Types of open questions		
Hypothetical questions	To assess underpinning knowledge eg: • To find out how a person would really go about doing something. • To assess depth of knowledge and problem solving skills.	- *What if you haven't got a spare spring to replace the worn one? What would you do?* - *If a client thought he could bathe himself and you knew he was not stable, what would you do?*
Reflective/ Mirror questions	• When the candidate needs to clarify their views. (The assessor can rephrase what the person has said. This gives them time to think about what they said and add more information).	- *In relation to ordering supplies you said you do the following... am I correct?* - *Now you said that there were two main safety requirements ...is that correct?*
Justifying questions	• To find the reasons behind the way something was done. • To assess underpinning knowledge.	- *Can you explain why you chose that method?* - *Why did you do that?*
Probing questions	• When the initial answer did not give enough information.	- *Anything else?* - *..and when you had finished that procedure what would you do next?* - *Could you be a little more precise?* - *Could you give me some details about...?*

Questions to avoid

Negative questions

Read the following question.

You don't need to ask the client if he needs assistance with a lift to a wheel chair, do you?

The answer to this question may be interpreted as:

'Yes' (you don't need to ask the client, you just assist)
or *'No' (you don't ask) or 'Yes' (you do ask as the client is aware of the level of assistance needed)*

Different cultures interpret negative questions in different ways.

Throw away or leading questions

Read the following leading questions with a more appropriate alternative.

The machinery is in good condition? (if it is) Rather ask: *What is the condition of the machinery?*

You wouldn't use that would you. Rather ask.....*Which piece of equipment would you use?*

Question Scenarios

Activity 1

Read Scenario 1 and answer the questions.

Scenario 1:

Ron is being assessed at Certificate II level from the Training Package for Community Services and Aged Care. It is a part of a recognition of prior learning process to upskill the existing employees. He has had an observation at a client's house and now the assessor is asking some questions.

Assessor: What would you do if you entered a house for the first time that was obviously in a bad state of repair, cluttered with dirty clothes, boxes and rubbish all over the floor? Your job was only to bath and dress the client.

Ron: Firstly I would clear away a path and make sure it was safe to move the client from the bedroom to the bathroom.

Assessor: Anything else?

Ron: Yeah when I had finished I would fill in a hazard report and a workplace review form to review what work needs to be done at the house.

1. What type of questions does the assessor use. Mark on the script the type of question used. **Hy=**hypothetical, **Pr=**probing, **Re=**reflective etc.

2. Why did the assessor use these types of questions?

_____

_____

_____

Activity 2

Read Scenario 2 and answer the questions.

Scenario 2:

A candidate is being assessed for his Forklift Licence.

Assessor: *How do you determine the safe working load and load conditions that your machine can work under?*

Candidate: *By the info on the ID plate.*

Assessor: *Show me the ID plate.*

Candidate: *There's the plate (pointing to the plate).*

Assessor: *Tell me a little bit about the ID plate.*

Candidate: *You can get the tyre pressure rating and safe working load from it.*

Assessor: *Where would you find the load centre on the plate?*

Candidate: *Oh, there it is...600 mm.*

Assessor: *What does 600 mm relate to?*

1. In scenario 2 the assessor uses closed and general open questions. Mark on the script **Cl** for closed and **Op** for open.
2. Why did the assessor use these types of questions?

_____

_____

3. The assessor used another questioning technique. Can you identify this technique? Mark on the script where this technique was used.

_____

_____

Starting a question bank

Activity 3

Using your area of expertise, write different types of questions you would use in the assessment process.

Type of question	Example
Closed - to assess specific knowledge	
General open-ended	
Hypothetical	
Mirror/Reflective	
Justifying	
Probing	

Add any useful questions your colleagues have written.

Discuss your answers with your trainer.

SEEKING CLARIFICATION

Assessor seeking clarification
Candidate seeking clarification

As a workplace assessor you will need to *seek clarification* from the person being assessed for a variety of reasons:

- You didn't understand the response.
- You didn't hear the response.
- You felt that part of the response was correct and you are offering a 'second chance'.

You may also want the candidate to seek clarification at any time, so you must encourage them to:

- ask questions
- interrupt
- check their understanding

Assessor seeking clarification

Here are a few suggestions when you need to seek clarification from the candidate.

- If you didn't understand a response, that is you didn't hear it or the speaker spoke too quickly, ask the following questions:
  - *Sorry, could you repeat that please.*
  - *Sorry, I didn't understand, could you say that again please.*
  - *I'm afraid I don't understand what you mean.*

- If you heard some of the response but missed out on important information, repeat what you heard followed by a specific question eg:
  - *Before you turn on a forklift you need to check the brakes, tyres, reverse lights and sorry, what else?*
  - *I'm sorry I didn't quite follow what you said about...*

- If some of the information was correct and another part was incorrect or you didn't understand or hear, repeat or summarise the information and wait for the information to be corrected or confirmed eg:

  Assessor: *So, before you start work in a confined space you must set up to maximise space and take into account hazards such as sloping ground. Is that right?*

  Candidate: *Yeah and you must know all the relevant OH&S procedures, such as safe working distances from electricity.*

Candidate seeking clarification

Here are a few suggestions on how to encourage a candidate to seek clarification.

- Tell the person explicitly to ask for clarification eg:

  Please tell me if I am difficult to understand.

- Invite the person to stop (interrupt) you to check information eg:

  You can stop me at any time to check.

- Take responsibility for your communication eg:

  Sometimes I am not clear.

- Invite people to check their understanding as you go along eg:

  Have I been clear about this?
  Is there anything I can clarify at this point?

- Avoid using the question *Do you understand?* Most people will simply answer 'yes'.

- You can provide written information in Plain English. This gives people the opportunity to read at their own pace or to seek translation and to come back later with questions. This of course should be done well in advance. Here are some suggestions on what to include:
  - *The purpose of this interview is to make sure you are competent in all the elements of this unit.*
  - *Your assessor will ask you some questions about the training you have just completed/work activities relevant to the unit of competence.*
  - *If you are not sure about the question, please ask your assessor to repeat or to re-phrase the question.*
  - *If your assessor speaks too quickly, please ask them to speak more slowly.*
  - *If you are not satisfied with any aspect of the interview, please speak with your assessor or supervisor.*

Activity 1

With a colleague, choose an area you both are very familiar with, eg changing a tyre, driving a forklift, how to perform CPR, how to photocopy a document, how to send an e-mail. A is the assessor and B is the candidate. Conduct a mock assessment. During the questioning process, use as many clarification strategies as possible as assessor and candidate. Rotate roles.

If possible record the dialogue and ask your trainer to listen and check.

GIVING FEEDBACK

Invite candidate to self assess
Feedback to candidates who are competent
Feedback to candidates who are not yet competent
Language skills involved in giving negative information
Roleplay
Giving feedback checklist

A workplace assessor has the responsibility to provide feedback to the candidate about their performance. Feedback can indicate that a candidate:

- has achieved competence
- has not achieved competence
- needs further training
- is performing a task in an unsafe manner

Remember, it will be much easier to give feedback if you have previously established rapport with the candidate.

Invite candidate to self assess

Before you offer feedback invite the candidate to assess their own performance. The candidate's response could give you an indication of how to present your feedback. Here are some questions you could ask:

How did you feel about your performance?

Do you feel that you have completed the task successfully?

Do you feel that you have performed the task competently?

Do you feel that you have satisfied all of the performance/assessment criteria?

Are there any of the assessment criteria that you feel you haven't satisfied?

What areas do you feel you need to improve?

Are there any aspects of the assessment that you are not satisfied with?

Feedback to candidates who are competent

As the assessment process is also a learning process for the candidate, you need to give detailed feedback, even if the candidate has achieved competence. For example, perhaps the candidate was not strong in some areas but excelled in others. Nevertheless, the overall assessment was judged as competent.

In the following feedback an assessor stresses the importance of maintaining safety standards.

> *You've done really well. I'm assessing you as competent...but remember what you've done is meet the requirements today...it's up to you to stay at this level and keep up the safety standards.....*

Feedback to candidates who are not yet competent

Here are some strategies to help you provide feedback to candidates who are not yet competent.

- Be positive, without raising false expectations eg:

  Your preparation was well done. You had all the appropriate gear there. That was fine.

- Be precise about gaps in the candidate's performance eg:

  Your rapport with the client was good and you really showed empathy with her. The preparation for the client's bath was also good. However, you are not following the standard procedure for transferring a client from a wheelchair to the shower chair.....

- Identify whether only part(s) of the assessment needs to be repeated and, if so, which part(s) eg:

  I'd like to see you perform another couple of transfers if you don't mind...just to see if you understand the procedures and can apply them in a variety of situations. I will only be looking at the transfer. I'm happy with everything else - completing the hazard forms and writing reports, preparing the client and establishing empathy and dressing the client.

- Suggest strategies to help the candidate overcome gaps eg:
  - *Ask your supervisor if you could assist another carer for a couple of weeks.*
  - *Have you attended OH&S training? Perhaps you should ask if you could attend the OH&S training before the next assessment.*
  - *Maybe your supervisor could assist you with a couple of lifts to give you a bit more confidence.*
  - *Have you read the standard procedures for performing a transfer? Your supervisor has a copy.*

- Arrange another opportunity for the candidate to be assessed eg:

  In two weeks I will contact your supervisor and arrange another assessment time with you. Is that suitable or would you like more time?

- Make sure the feedback is confidential and give it to the candidate in private.

Adapted from: *Training Package for Assessment and Workplace Training Facilitator's Pack* NAWTB ANTA 1999

Activity 1

Read the scenario and the dialogue and fill out the checklist on the following page.

Scenario:

Colin and Roy work in the Drilling Industry. Roy is Colin's supervisor and has just assessed him on one aspect of assembling a drilling core barrel. Whilst Colin's performance was generally good, he has been assessed as not yet competent.

Roy	*1*	*Your preparation was well done. You had all the appropriate gear there. That was fine.*
	2	*You treated the equipment OK etc, like you wasn't rough on it. You were sort of gentle with the tube.*
Colin	*3*	*Yep.*
Roy	*4*	*And you done everything right. Your question and answering was very good.*
Colin	*5*	*Oh yeah.*
Roy	*6*	*Just sort of no hesitation. You knew what you was doing and everything. That's the good part.*
	6	*(pause) There was just one little bad part in it.*
Colin	*7*	*Oh yeah, what's that?*
Roy	*9*	*Well (pause) when you were checking the back end part of it, you were very thorough*
	10	*except you missed the landing body.*
Colin	*11*	*Oh yeah, no worries.*
Roy	*12*	*Now that's an important part. If that's worn and it sticks down the hole, as you know,*
	13	*we've got to pull the rods to get the tubes out.*
Colin	*14*	*Right, yeah.*
Roy	*15*	*Just based on that. Everything else is fine.*
Colin	*16*	*Oh yeah, good.*
Roy	*17*	*But there's nothing wrong with doing it again in a couple of days time.*
Colin	*18*	*No worries.*
Roy	*19*	*Okay. You quite comfortable with that?*
Colin	*20*	*Okay mate. No problems. See you later.*
Roy	*21*	*Righto mate.*

Transcribed from video *Assessing Core Skills* Australian Drilling Industry Training Committee
Workplace Assessor's Guide for the Australian Drilling Industry © ADITC & DTEC 1996

1. Complete the checklist. The first one has been done for you.

Strategy	Script	Line No.
Be positive, without raising false expectations.	*Your preparation was well done. You had all the appropriate gear. That was fine. You treated the equipment OK.* *Your question and answering were good.* *You knew what you was doing.....That's the good part.*	1-2 4 6-7
Be precise about gaps in the candidate's performance.		
Identify whether only part(s) of the assessment need to be repeated and, if so, which part(s).		
Suggest strategies to help the candidate overcome gaps.		
Arrange another opportunity for the candidate to be assessed.		

2. Suggest ways that Roy could improve the feedback.

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Language skills involved in giving negative information

Giving negative information, in this case informing a candidate that they have not yet achieved competence is a communication skill that requires some practice. Candidates will always be disappointed on hearing that they have not yet achieved competence. However, there are ways to soften the information. These softeners can also be used as feedback during the assessment.

The language skills we will be looking at are:

- Using softeners:
  - *I'm afraid*
  - Qualifiers eg *some, just*
  - *Not + very*
- Use of linking words
- Interrupting techniques

Softeners

I'm afraid

I'm afraid is a phrase often used to show that the following information will be negative eg:

I'm afraid I can't assess you as competent until you have shown that you understand all the OH&S requirements of the job.

I'm afraid I'll have to stop the assessment here as what you are doing is an unsafe work practice.

Your practical work was really good... Your lifting method was excellent but I'm afraid that your written assessment showed that you don't yet fully understand all the policies that you need to be aware of.....

Activity 2

Using your area of expertise, write two other examples using *I'm afraid*.

_____

_____

Discuss your answers with your trainer.

Qualifiers

When Roy was giving feedback to Colin (page 63) he softened his feedback with the qualifiers *just* and *little*.

That's the good part. (pause) There was just one little bad part in it.

Other qualifiers to soften information could be:

Qualifier	Example
slight	*There's a slight problem with how you assembled that axle.....*
a little bit too	*Your calculations aren't correct so your quantities always are a little bit too much for an even dough mixture.*
some	*From your response to the case study I have some reservations about how you would handle an emergency situation. Could you explain why you chose that particular method?*
a bit of a	*My colleague who assessed your written assessment said that there's a bit of a problem with your writing and that the message was not clear enough. Would you be able to do the written assessment again in a couple of weeks. Maybe your supervisor can assist you with the reports before then.*

Activity 3

Using your area of expertise, write two other examples using qualifiers.

Discuss your answers with your trainer.

Not + very

In both of the following cases, the negative adjective is replaced with a positive adjective eg *unclear/clear shoddy/thorough*. This is preceded by *not + very* which softens the negative information.

Your objectives are unclear.
Your objectives are not very clear.

Your preparation was shoddy.
Your preparation was not very thorough.

Activity 4

Change the underlined negative adjectives into positive adjectives and precede with *not + very*.

1. *Your suggestion on how to handle that problem was impractical.*

2. *Your computer skills are bad.*

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Interrupting techniques

It is quite possible that you need to stop the assessment because the candidate:

- misunderstood your question
- is performing the task in an unsafe manner

In this case you may need to interrupt the answer or simply stop the task:

May I interrupt you for a moment?

Sorry to interrupt you, but...

You seem to have misunderstood my question.

I'm sorry my question was not clear.

I'm sorry but I'll have to stop the assessment here.....

I'm afraid you haven't safely secured the load. I'll have to stop the assessment.

You may not feel confident about interrupting an assessment but remember that it could improve the candidate's chance of being assessed as competent and also stop any accidents.

Activity 5

With a colleague, think of an area you are both familiar with, for example, driving a forklift, photocopying a document or changing a tyre.

A is the assessor and begins the assessment by asking questions. B is the candidate and answers the questions. A interrupts for a particular reason. Rotate roles.

Discuss how you felt about being interrupted all the time and what effect this had on the questioning process.

Use of linking words

Activity 6

Read the following transcript of giving feedback.

> *Your rapport with the client was good and you really showed empathy with her. The preparation for the client's bath was also good. However, you are not following the standard procedure for transferring a client from a wheelchair to the shower chair and besides this you are not following standard procedure for completing the hazard report forms which are critically important. Overall I'm assessing you as not yet competent so I will need to arrange a time for another assessment but I will only be looking at the two areas I mentioned.*

The assessor linked her ideas with words such as:

also, however, besides, overall, so, but

Underline where these words occur in the text.

Linking words indicate what is coming next in either a spoken or written text for example, a contrasting statement, listing something in the correct order, giving a reason, summarising. The table on the following page indicates the function of some linking words.

Time	Result/effect	Contrast	Addition
then next when previously soon lastly finally after	so therefore as a result consequently	but however nevertheless although on the other hand while in contrast yet	and firstly secondly thirdly in addition also besides (this)
Reason	**Summary**	**Exemplification**	**Comparison**
because as since	lastly to conclude in brief overall finally on the whole	for example for instance including such as	likewise equally in the same way

Activity 7

What is the meaning indicated by the linking words used by the assessor in the feedback example in Activity 6?

Linking Word	Meaning
also	_____
however	_____
besides (this)	_____
overall	_____
so	_____
but	_____

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Activity 8

Read the following transcripts of giving feedback, then write your own (oral) feedback of an assessment you could be conducting in your workplace. Write one for both competent and not yet competent. Check your answers with your trainer.

Competent

OK Joan.....that concludes the assessment for the whole unit on Introduction to Aged Care. I've been very impressed with your practical skills, for example your care with customers, lifting, cleaning and generally communicating with the customers. However you need to be a little more thorough with completing hazard reports and getting them to the supervisor on time although when you did see a critically dangerous hazard you reported it clearly and immediately. Overall I'm assessing you as competent.

Not yet competent

OK Joan.....that concludes the assessment for the whole unit on Introduction to Aged Care. I have been very impressed with your practical skills, for example your care with customers, lifting, cleaning and generally communicating with the customers. However after reading your hazard reports and observing you at a customer's house I am not satisfied with your written reporting skills. Completing the hazard report forms is critically important in reducing the number of accidents at work. Therefore I must assess you as not yet competent. Maybe you could.....

Your feedback

Competent _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Not yet competent _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Roleplay

Activity 9

Using your area of expertise, give feedback to a candidate. Choose one of the following scenarios which will influence the type of feedback you will give. (You may use the feedback you wrote in Activity 8.)

The candidate has been:

- assessed as competent - some areas were not as good as the others but overall the candidate is competent
- assessed as not yet competent because of deficiencies in one particular area
- assessed as not yet competent overall

In groups of three, roleplay your feedback. A gives the feedback. B is the candidate and responds. C completes the checklist on the following page. Rotate roles.

Giving feedback checklist

Did your colleague	✓ ✗	Comment
invite the candidate to self assess?		
stay positive without raising false expectations?		
give precise information about gaps in the candidate's performance?		
identify whether only parts of the assessment needed to be repeated and if so, which parts?		
suggest strategies to help the candidate overcome gaps?		
arrange another opportunity for the candidate to be assessed?		
use softeners such as: *I'm afraid* *some, just a little bit* *not+very*		
interrupt where necessary?		
use appropriate linking words?		

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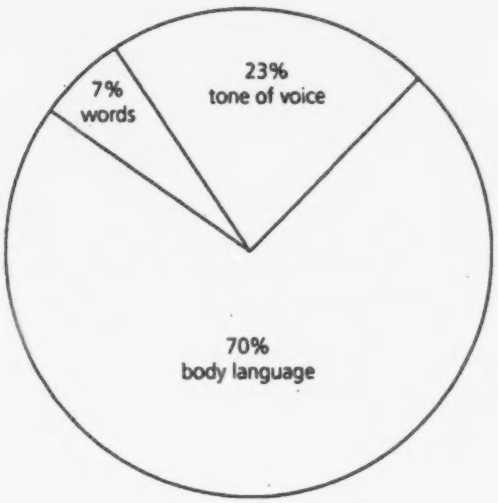
NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION

How we communicate
What is non-verbal communication?
Body language
Use of space
Dress/appearance
Tone of voice

As workplace assessors you are not expected to become an expert on non-verbal communication. However during the assessment process effective communication skills are essential to an assessment that is valid, reliable and fair. Your skill as an assessor will improve if you become more aware of your own non-verbal communication and how this may affect others.

How we communicate

Research has shown that body language is extremely important in communication. This is one researcher's perspective of how important it is.



Source: *InterCultural Skills*: NSW TAFE Commission 1994

Activity 1

What conclusions can you draw from this diagram?

What is non-verbal communication?

Read these statements. They are remarks people made about someone else's behaviour.

He looked puzzled when I asked him questions.
I knew he didn't want to be there by the way he walked in the room.
She seemed very nervous.
The room was arranged in a very unfriendly way.
She looked at me blankly.

The behaviour that provoked these responses was **non-verbal**.

Activity 2

Discuss or 'act out' the behaviour in each of the above statements.

Non-verbal communication is communicating in a way other than speaking or writing. We can understand another person's message by interpreting signs such as:

Body language

Gestures

Eye contact

Facial expressions

Appearance

Physical characteristics

Dress

Use of space

Distance people maintain from each other

Tone of voice

Sending different messages by changing pitch of voice

Much of our non-verbal behaviour is learned from our environment and culture, so we must be particularly careful not to misinterpret the behaviour of people from different cultures or social groups.

Body language

Activity 3

How would you express these feelings using body language?

Anger	Disappointment	Nervousness
Distrust	Surprise	Sadness
Eagerness	Happiness	Boredom

Use of space

People control the space around them and this sends messages to others. It is generally recognised that there are four distinct differences within which communication takes place.

Public distance	3.5 - 7.5 metres
Social distance	1 - 3.5 metres
Personal distance	0.5 - 3.5 metres
Intimate distance	0 - 0.5 metres

Public distance

This is a comfortable distance for both listeners and speakers in a public meeting. There is no social contact. It is often used by individuals to gain higher status.

Social distance

Social distance is the distance we use when we are speaking to strangers. A table or desk is often placed between the people involved to ensure that a suitable distance is kept - the wider the table, the greater the distance.

Personal distance

If we allow someone to come within this range, it implies closeness of interest and equal status.

Intimate distance

Physical contact and real closeness is permitted between partners and parents and children.

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Activity 4

This activity looks at how personal space differs within social groups and cultures.

Your trainer will ask two people to go to opposite ends of the room and then slowly walk towards each other while carrying on a conversation. The rest of the group will observe what happens. The two people will generally stop at a distance of about 1 metre from each other. Your trainer will ask them to move closer.

You will then repeat the activity with different groupings eg two males from different backgrounds, two females from similar backgrounds etc.

After you have observed this think about and discuss these questions:

1. What did you see happening?
2. How did the people feel?

Usually any closer than about 1 metre people will feel considerable discomfort unless the partner is someone with whom they have a close relationship. Any closer than about 1 metre people may demonstrate barrier behaviours eg folding arms, stepping back or even pushing the person.

However depending on the culture, social group and level of intimacy this distance may differ greatly. For example, two women from a culture that usually greets by kissing on each cheek may walk up to each other and greet in this manner or a man and a woman from different cultures may stop more than 1 metre apart and still feel uncomfortable with this distance.

You are not expected to become an expert on proxemics. However, it is useful to be aware of how you use space and the possible effects on the assessment process. Remember what you may consider your 'comfort zone' may not be the candidate's 'comfort zone'.

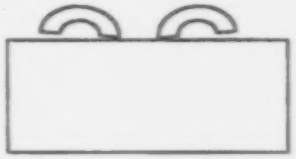
The activity on the following page looks at seating arrangements during an assessment.

Activity 5

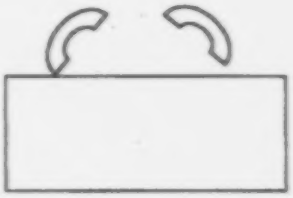
Look at these seating arrangements. What effect could they have on communication or how you would feel if you were a candidate in the assessment situation?

a)

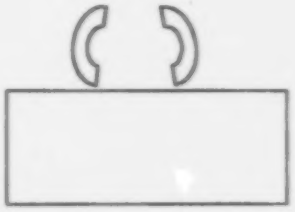
a) _____

b) 

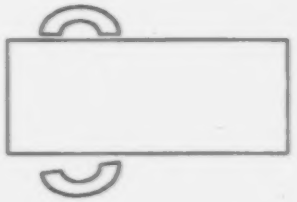
b) _____

c) 

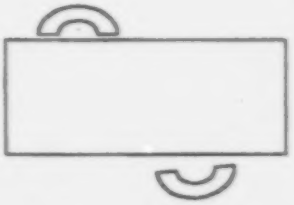
c) _____

d) 

d) _____

e) 

e) _____

f) 

f) _____

Dress/ appearance

Dress and appearance is often the first indication of what we think of another person. Remember as an assessor you are assessing a person's competence against a set of criteria, not who they are or what they are wearing.

Tone of voice

Read these two statements. Read the bold print louder than the rest of the sentence and with a higher tone.

Would you please stop what you are doing and ***come over here****.*

Would you ***please stop what you are doing*** *and come over here.*

The first sentence is a request to come and see what someone else is doing. The second is a much stronger request, possibly repeated, because the participant hasn't responded to a previous request.

Activity 6

Read these two statements increasing the **tone** of voice with each word in bold. Then answer the question.

a) When would you like to ***start*** *the assessments?*

b) When would ***you*** *like to start the assessments?*

What is the difference in meaning between statement a) and statement b)?

_____

_____

_____

Again you are not expected to become an expert in this field - merely to be aware of effects on your communication. The important thing to remember is that the message can change according to where you place the emphasis on a word. Different languages have different stress patterns which can lead to misunderstandings. As an assessor you need to be aware of this when dealing with candidates from different language backgrounds.

PLAIN ENGLISH

What is Plain English?
Suggestions to make writing clearer
Designing a document
Writing instructions

As an assessor you are responsible for writing a variety of documents which must be easily read by people with a wide range of language and literacy skills. These documents could be:

- notices
- instructions
- checklists
- forms
- assessment tools
- reports/ recommendations

By using Plain English you will be able to get the message across clearly and effectively.

What is Plain English?

Plain English is not a rigid set of rules but it is about choosing the right kind of language to suit:

- **who** you are writing to
- **what** you are writing about
- **the purpose** of the document you are writing

Who are you writing to?

How well can they read?

Are they managers/assessment candidates?

What are you writing about?

What is the essential information?

Is the topic new information?

Does the information need to be very technical?

The purpose

Is it a set of instructions?

Is it a checklist?

Is it an explanation of the assessment process?

Suggestions to make writing clearer

Here are some suggestions on how to make writing clearer.

Suggestion	Not Plain English	Plain English
Keep your sentences or questions short and use clear language.	The criteria to be used for this assessment have been discussed with me and I am aware that I will be assessed against these criteria.	The assessor has given me a copy of the assessment criteria and discussed them with me. I know that I will be assessed against these criteria.
Arrange your information in a logical order or time sequence. It will be less confusing.	Please sign and date the form after you have read the conditions.	Read the conditions, then sign and date the form.
Put question words at the beginning of the question. It makes the question easier to understand.	Quality testing is the responsibility of **which** department? In built-up areas **what** checks should be made before excavating?	**Which** department is responsible for quality testing? **What** should you check before excavating in a built-up area?
Use everyday language. It is easier to understand.	Identify two (2) communication methods used to provide daily work instructions.	Name two ways of giving daily work instructions.

Source: Jenny Kerr *Effective Communication for Assessment in the Quarry Industry* ANTA 1999

Activity 1

Read the following sentences. Tick the ones which are in Plain English.

Example

What should you do if you see a fire hazard?	☑	On identifying a fire hazard what should you do?	☐
1. Quality testing is the responsibility of **which** department?	☐	**Which** department is responsible for quality testing?	☐
2. Name two ways of giving daily work instructions.	☐	Identify two (2) communication methods used to provide daily work instructions.	☐

Activity 2

Rewrite these questions using the suggestions on the previous page.

1. What precautions should be taken when a leak in the fuel system is suspected or detected?

_____

_____

2. What is the minimum distance you should keep your forklift truck and load away from power lines?

_____

_____

3. Before you start the assessment make sure you have read the conditions and signed that you have understood all of the instructions.

_____

_____

_____

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Designing a document

The way you design or layout your document is an important part of making sure that your message is clear. Here are some suggestions:

Use headings and subheadings

This will make your document clearer. Headings help to break up the text and help the readers find what they need more easily.

Boxes, bullets and numbers

These help to separate units of information.

White spaces

Using plenty of white space between paragraphs or points makes documents clearer and easier to follow.

Bold type

This is useful for headings or to highlight important points.

Letter size

Use a letter size that people can read without difficulty. 12 point size is widely used.

12 point	The results of your assessment are confidential
10 point	The results of your assessment are confidential
8 point	The results of your assesment are confidential

Font

Use a font that is easy to read eg Times New Roman, Garamond, Arial.

Test what you've written

The best way to find out if your writing is clear and easily understood is to try it out on some of the people who are likely to use it. Use their feedback to revise and try and improve your document.

Source: Jenny Kerr *Effective Communication for Assessment in the Quarry Industry* ANTA 1999

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Activity 3

Look at the following document.

> Assessments
> Where notice of cancellation is received at least 24 hours before the appointed time of the assessment, 100% of the fee paid, less an administrative charge of $30, will be refunded. Where notice of cancellation is received less than twenty hours before the appointed time of the assessment, no refund will be given.

What is wrong with the design of this document?

Activity 4

Find a document from your workplace that you consider does not communicate a clear and effective message. Rewrite it using the Plain English suggestions on page 86 and 88.

Check your answer with your trainer.

Writing instructions

Written instructions form part of the tools used to collect evidence. One of the performance criteria in BSZ401A Plan Assessment from the Training Package for Assessment and Workplace Training is:

Clear instructions (spoken or written) are prepared including any adjustments which may be made to address the characteristics of the persons being assessed

As a 'new' workplace assessor you may feel more comfortable modelling your instructions on those that already exist in your organisation. Using models is an effective way to improve your writing. However you must remember that all candidates **do not** have the same language and literacy level so you must adjust your writing to suit the candidate's level.

Instructions used in an assessment could range from a simple instruction sheet provided before an observation to detailed instructions for a written assessment. The following suggestions apply to whatever type of instructions you are writing.

Writing instructions

Here are some suggestions for writing instructions:

Suggestion	Example
Consider the candidate's language skills.	You may need to translate the instructions into other languages.
Avoid formal and abstract words.	Explain when you would use that method. *Rather than* Explain in what context that method would be used.
Use personal language.	When you have finished... *rather than* On completion of...
Write the action word first in simple instructions.	**Answer** all questions. **Complete** the hazard report form.
Number instructions when there is a specific order.	1. Conduct a precheck. 2. Start the vehicle. 3. Lift a load. 4. Shut down the vehicle. *Rather than* Before you start the vehicle conduct a precheck.....
Organise the instructions logically.	Headings Before the assessment During the assessment After the assessment
Organise the instructions using dot points or boxes.	The assessor will give you: • a copy of the competency standards that you are being assessed on • a copy of the questions you will be asked • a checklist which will be used in the assessment
Illustrate with an example.	Circle the correct answer. For example: A Ⓒ B D
Use a format and layout that is clear and uncluttered.	See Designing a document on page 88.

Activity 5

Tick the instruction which you think is easier to understand, then answer the question.

1a) ☐

Before you change a tyre you should first make sure that the brakes are on and then you can loosen the wheel nuts and then remove the tyre.

☐

Before you change a tyre:

1. make sure the brakes are on
2. loosen the wheel nuts
3. then remove the tyre.

b) Why do you think the instruction you chose is easier to understand?

_____

_____

2a) ☐

Answer the following questions. Then check your answers.

☐

You should check your answers after you have answered them.

b) Why do you think the instruction you chose is easier to understand?

_____

_____

3a) ☐

Upon receipt of the documents proceed to the filing clerk and ensure the files are securely stored.

☐

When you receive the documents go to the filing clerk. Make sure they are securely stored.

b) Why do you think the instruction you chose is easier to understand?

_____

_____

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Activity 6

Choose an assessment task you have developed during your training as a Workplace Assessor or an assessment task that you often use in the workplace. Write a set of instructions which will enable another assessor to follow the same procedure and give all the necessary information.

Discuss your work with your trainer.

WRITING FEEDBACK REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Different types of assessment reports
Assessment report model
Writing skills for feedback reports
Writing skills for recommendations

As an assessor you will need to write reports on the conduct of the assessment and review findings.

This could range from a small paragraph in the *Comments* or *Further Training* section on a standard assessment form to a detailed report on the assessment process. Usually organisations have developed a form or proforma which makes the process of writing reports easier.

Comments and feedback are important whether the candidate has been assessed as competent or not yet competent.

Different types of assessment reports

Reporting on the assessment process includes:

- reporting on the conduct of assessment
- reviewing assessment
- reporting on review findings

Organisations may have their own procedures in place for reporting and reviewing assessments which may include oral reports eg assessor network meetings, feedback sessions with supervisors as well as written reports. Whatever the reporting system organisations need some sort of written documentation so that assessment decisions can be easily accessible for reasons such as:

- appeals processes
- job reclassification
- qualification records
- further training requirements

As an assessor it is your responsibility to maintain these records accurately.

In reporting on the conduct of the assessment you need to include:

- clear and constructive feedback
- information about reassessment opportunities and review and appeals process
- positive and negative features of the assessment
- suggestions for improving any aspect of the assessment process

These could be listed on one proforma or on separate forms.

In reporting on review findings you need to include recommendations for changes to the assessment procedures.

Assessment report model

Activity 1

Look at the assessment report model on the following page. Does this form include all the necessary information?

Activity 2

Find the assessment report forms used in your workplace.

Look at a variety of assessment report forms from different workplaces and analyse whether they include all the necessary information.

Discuss your answers with your trainer.

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Name of Candidate		
Name of Assessor		
Date	**Time**	**Location**
Purpose of assessment		
Evidence collected You may need extra checklists etc	• • • •	
Resources required		
Special needs/ conditions		

Competencies covered *(You may need extra lists eg records of competencies)*	*C*	*NYC*

Comments			
Decision appealed		**Reassessment date:**	
Signature Candidate: Date:		Signature Assessor: Date:	

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Writing skills for feedback reports

Writing feedback on the conduct of an assessment may only involve a small paragraph in the Comments section of a form. The writing needs to be clear and concise as this information could be used if an appeal is lodged.

A report on review of assessment findings may be longer and more formal.

This section will look at the following writing skills for writing feedback and other reports:

- Linking words
- Vocabulary for writing feedback and recommendations

Activity 3

Read the scenario and comments from the following assessment report written by the assessor then answer the questions on the following page.

Scenario:

Joan was assessed against the Unit Introduction to Aged Care for Certificate I in Aged Care Work. She was assessed as not yet competent in completing required written documentation because she incorrectly completed critically important hazard report forms.

Below is the written feedback in the Comments section of the assessor's report.

Comments:

Joan is very caring with clients and applies correct safety procedures when transferring clients and using cleaning products. She also establishes a good rapport with her clients. However, she needs to familiarise herself with the workplace policy handbook as well as improving written communication skills. Hazard report forms were incorrectly completed and messages to other workers attending the customer's house were unclear.

I recommend that Joan attend communication skills training on how to write workplace documents or that the supervisor allocates one hour per week for a couple of weeks to assist with report writing.

1. What are the *positive* feedback points?

- _____
- _____
- _____

2. What are the *negative* feedback points?

- _____
- _____
- _____

3. What are the recommendations?

- _____
- _____

Linking words

Using the correct linking words can make reading much easier to follow. For example after reading *but* or *however*, we know that the next piece of information will be a contrast.

Activity 4

Circle these linking words in the comments on Joan's performance on page 97.

and *as well as* *however* *or*

Activity 5

Read the following paragraph.

> The assessment process is also a learning process for the candidate, therefore you need to give detailed feedback even if the candidate has achieved competence. For example, perhaps the candidate was weak in some areas but excelled in others. Overall, the assessment was judged as competent. On the other hand, the candidate may have been assessed as not yet competent as some areas were good but the critical areas were not up to standard.

In the paragraph above the ideas are linked by words such as:

also, therefore even if, for example, but, overall, on the other hand, as

Underline where these words occur in the text. The first two have been done for you.

Linking words indicate what is coming next in a text eg:

- a contrasting statement
- listing something in the correct order
- giving a reason
- summarising

The table on the following page indicates the function of some linking words.

Time	Result/ effect	Contrast
then next when previously soon lastly finally after	so therefore as a result consequently	but however nevertheless although on the other hand while in contrast yet
Addition	**Reason/ cause**	**Summary**
and firstly secondly thirdly in addition also besides (this)	because as since	lastly to conclude in brief overall finally on the whole
Exemplification	**Comparison**	**Condition**
for example for instance including such as	likewise equally in the same way	even if unless all the same despite this

Activity 6

What is the meaning indicated by the linking words in the paragraph in Activity 5?

Linking Word	Meaning
even if	_____
overall	_____
on the other hand	_____
therefore	_____
as	_____

Vocabulary for writing feedback and recommendations

When writing feedback comments or recommendations for further training you could use language such as:

Develop (a certain skill)

Become familiar with (a certain policy)

Familiarise him/herself with (standard procedures)

Allow (more time....)

Modify/ Change (work procedures)

Practise (a certain skill)

Attend (certain training)

Apply (certain policy or procedure)

Allocate (more time to)

Participate in (more training)

Follow (safety procedures)

Activity 7

1. Underline where these words were used in the comments on Joan's performance in Activity 3.
2. From your area of expertise write five sentences using one of the above words in each sentence. (You may have to change the form eg *attend* to *attends*.)

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Check your answers with your trainer.

Writing skills for recommendations

You need to make recommendations in both Conduct and Review Assessment. In Conduct Assessment you need to make suggestions for improving any aspect of the assessment process to appropriate personnel. In Review Assessment you need to make recommendations to appropriate personnel for modifications to the assessment procedures in light of the review outcomes.

When writing a recommendation you are telling someone else to do something. It might be to:

- rewrite the assessment forms
- improve safety while assessing
- use two assessors
- allow more time for each assessment
- allow more discussion with appropriate personnel

Activity 8

Read the following recommendations.

Recommendations

I recommend that:

1. All assessment checklists are uniform. This will assist with reliability of assessments.
2. OH&S co-ordinators are trained as workplace assessors.
3. Discussions with all workplace supervisors occur before any assessments commence.

Now read recommendation three but put *should* before the verb *occur*. Does this soften or strengthen the recommendation? Do the same with *must*.

1. _____

2. _____

If you want to soften or strengthen the first two recommendations the verb *are* needs to be changed to *be*, for example:

1. All assessment checklists **should be** uniform. This will assist with reliability of the assessments.

2. OH&S co-ordinators **must be** trained as workplace assessors.

If you are writing simple recommendations on an assessment report such as in the further training or feedback section, you may want to use a less formal format eg:

I recommend that Joan attend communication skills training on how to write workplace documents or that the supervisor allocates one hour per week for a couple of weeks to assist with report writing.

Activity 9

1. Write a less formal recommendation for an assessment performance checklist for a candidate who is not yet competent.

2. Write three more formal recommendations on changes that you think are needed for the training you are doing now.

3. Now go back to the assessment report model on page 96 and write a practice report on your assessment.

Check your answers with your trainer.

GLOSSARY

This list does not include all the assessment terminology you will need but it may help you understand some of the words. Add to the list when you find a word or expression that you do not understand.

These words will be discussed during your Workplace Assessor training.

Allowable adjustments Changes you need to make to an assessment tool, procedure or method which will make sure that the assessment will be valid and reliable and that it will take into consideration the characteristics of the person being assessed.

Appeals process A process where the person being assessed or the employer may disagree with the assessment and want a reassessment.

Assessment The process of collecting evidence and making judgements as to whether competency has been achieved.

Assessment guidelines Part of the training package that gives an overview of the assessment system, assessor qualifications and training, designing assessment resources, technical principles of assessment and national assessment principles.

Assessment method A way of collecting evidence that will demonstrate competency. These include observations, interviews, questionnaires and portfolios.

Assessment strategy The process of assessment. It gives the essential features of the assessment that need to be covered to make sure that the assessment is valid, reliable, fair and flexible.

Assessment tool Whatever the assessor uses to obtain and interpret the evidence. This includes any instructions given.

AQF - Australian Qualifications Framework A framework for all education and training qualifications in Australia. It aims to provide consistency of qualifications across Australia.

ARF - Australian Recognition Framework A new system for national recognition arrangements with implications for all aspects of the Vocational and Education Training sector.

Competency Demonstration and application of a particular knowledge or skill to the standards of performance required in the workplace.

Competency standards Define the competencies required for effective performance in the workplace. All nationally endorsed competency standards are written in outcome terms and have a standards format:

Unit title
Unit Descriptor
Elements of competency
Performance criteria
Range of variables
Evidence Guide

Contingency management skills The requirement to respond to irregularities and breakdowns. One of the five dimensions of competency.

Criterion referenced assessment Collection of evidence about a candidate's performance which can be judged against requirements that are clearly set out in clearly defined criteria, eg competency standards.

Dimensions of competency All aspects of work performance:

- performing at an acceptable level of skill
- managing a number of different tasks
- responding and reacting appropriately when things go wrong
- fulfilling the responsibilities and expectations of the workplace
- transferring skills and knowledge to new situations

Elements of competency The basic building blocks of a unit of competency. Elements describe the tasks which make up the broader function or job which is described by the unit.

Evidence Information gathered which, when matched against performance criteria, provides proof of competency. Evidence can be:

Direct - observations
Indirect - from a third person
Supplementary - questions, portfolios, résumés, videos etc

Evidence guide Part of a unit of competency. Its purpose is to guide assessment of the unit of competency. The evidence guide specifies the:

- context of assessment
- critical aspects of assessment
- underpinning knowledge and skills

The evidence guide relates directly to the performance guide and the range of variables.

Fairness A fair assessment will not disadvantage any person and will take into account the characteristics of the person being assessed, such as candidates from non-English speaking backgrounds.

Flexibility Allows for assessment either on or off the job and mutually convenient times and situations.

Formative assessment Assessment which helps and supports learning by providing feedback about performance and if the candidate is ready to achieve competence.

Holistic assessment An integrated approach to assessment which tries to combine knowledge, understanding, problem solving, technical skills, attitudes and ethics into assessment events, ie it aims to:

- assess a group of related competencies together
- integrate knowledge, skills and workplace application
- focus on all areas not just task skills

ITABs Industry Training Advisory Bodies National bodies which represent specific industries. They are responsible for the development, review and implementation of competency standards in that specific industry.

Job/role environment skills The requirements to deal with the responsibilities and expectations of the work environment including working with others. One of the five dimensions of competency.

Key competency Employment related general competencies that are essential for effective participation in the workplace.

Moderation Process which makes sure that assessment procedures, tools or judgements are valid and reliable.

NTF National Training Framework Sets out the component parts of the vocational education system - national competency standards, national qualifications and national assessment guidelines - and their relationship to each other including implementation, quality assurance and recognition strategies and procedures.

Performance Criteria Statements which say what is to be assessed and the required level of performance. The performance criteria specify the activities, skills, knowledge and understanding that provide evidence of competent performance for each element of competency.

Quality Assurance A planned and systematic process of making sure that the requirements of the assessment, competency standards and any other criteria are applied in a consistent manner.

Range of variables Part of a competency standard which sets out a range of contexts in which performance can take place. The range helps the assessor identify the specific industry or enterprise application of the unit of competence.

RTOs Registered Training Organisations Training organisations which have been registered in accordance with the Australian Recognition Framework to provide vocational education and training services.

RPL Recognition of Prior Learning & RCC Recognition of Current Competencies The recognition and acknowledgment, through assessment, of competencies held and acquired through prior learning, formal training, work experience or life experience.

Reliability The consistency of interpretation of evidence and the assessment outcome whereby another assessor would come to the same judgement in the same situation.

Summative assessment Assessment to determine competence which comes at the end of a training program.

Task skills The requirement to perform individual tasks. One of the five dimensions of competency.

Task management skills The requirement to manage a number of different tasks within the job. One of the five dimensions of competency.

Transfer skills The requirement to adjust and develop knowledge and skills to suit new situations. One of the five dimensions of competency.

Training Package Each industry has its own training package.

Training Packages include:

- national competency standards
- national qualifications
- guidelines for assessing competence
- as well as
- resources to support learning and assessment
- professional development materials

Unit of competence A specific job or function written in terms of workplace outcomes which is further developed through elements and performance criteria.

Validity A valid assessment assesses what it claims to assess and is related to the relevant performance criteria.

Your glossary

Term	Meaning

ANSWER KEY

Reading Skills

Activity 1 page 7

1. Guidelines for Conducting Assessments
2. Technical principles of assessment
   Flexibility
   Validity
3. Yes, to assist in understanding principles of assessment.

Activity 2 page 11

1. Scan the Contents until you find the Guidelines for conducting assessments
   ↓
   Scan Section 7 for 7.1.3 Frequency of Assessments
   ↓
   Read the paragraph
2. .....frequency of assessment is a matter for negotiation between the candidate, the RTO, employer and other relevant parties to the training and assessment contract.

Activity 3 page 18

1. activities adjustments assessments assessor competencies cost- effective criteria evaluation evidence fair flexible holistic participants performance ratify relevant reliability sufficient validity
2. Audience 67, 146
   Computer in libraries 27
   Feedback 13-14

Activity 4 page 20

1. 4
2. 4
3. Section 4
4. 7
   18
   377

Activity 5 page 22

1 a)	agenda	216, 217, 220
	capital letters	259, 277-8, 282-3
	feedback	13-14
	group discussion	207-14
b)	agenda	meetings
	body language	non-verbal communication
	dress	clothing
c)	barriers to listening	57-8
	diagrams in notes	90-1

2 a) The index on page 19 has page numbers. The index on page 24 has page and clause numbers.

b)	basic safety principles	Clause 6.1, page 36
	safety clothing	Clause 4.3, page 27 (note index classifies Clothing, safety)
	danger tags	Clause 6.18, page 46

Activity 6 page 25

4

Activity 8 page 26

1. Australian Qualifications Framework
2. Performance criteria
3. The consistency of interpretation of evidence and the assessment outcome whereby another assessor would come to the same judgement in the same situation.

Activity 9 page 28

1.	Reporting Dangerous Conditions	6.2
	General Provisions	6
	Low Voltage	6.1.1
	Basic Safety Principles	6.1
	High Voltage	6.1.2

2. 6.5
   6.5.1
   6.5.2
   6.5.3
   6.6
   6.6.1
   6.7

Informing Appropriate Personnel

Activity 1,3,6 (Dialogue 2) pages 33,35,36

	Interaction	Function
A	*OK, thanks for coming everyone. I know you are all really busy so I'll be brief. As you know we will be assessing here next week and we will need to do direct observations as part of the assessment.*	Establish empathy. Show understanding. Assertive statement.
S1	*No we can't do that it's too dangerous. I'm not having those apprentices doing that, it's just too dangerous.*	Actively listen.
A	*I realise that you are concerned about safety. However we do need to do some direct observations together with simulations. All safety precautions will be in place and there'll be two assessors.*	Show understanding. Assertive contrasting statement.
S2	*No we've tried that before and it was disastrous.*	Actively listen.
A	*Yeah I appreciate that you're concerned but we must do these observations as well as the simulations. We are aware of all the safety precautions and this time we have two assessors.* ***Activity 3***	Show understanding. Assertive contrasting statement - broken record technique.
S1	*Why can't you just do the simulations, it really is too dangerous we have had accidents before. Then it comes back on us.*	Actively listen.
A	*Yeah I know it must be frustrating if you get the blame for someone else's mistakes but this time we have changed the procedure, that's why we have two assessors. If it looks dangerous we will stop the assessment and I assure you nobody here will be responsible.*	Show understanding. Assertive contrasting statement.
A	*I was wondering if you blokes could tell me what do you think are the things we need to look out for?.....* ***Activity 6***	Open question to creatively solve problem.

Activity 2 page 34

1. *I understand that it is really difficult. However there have been a lot of accidents in your section and the assessments will help us find out if the new workers are doing the right thing.*
2. *Yeah I know that some of you think it is a waste of time but when we find out who doesn't really understand the safety procedures, they can be trained....*
3. *I appreciate that you're concerned but we must do these observations together with the simulations.*
4. *I know it must be frustrating for you if you get the blame for someone else's mistakes but this time we have changed the procedure, that's why we have two assessors.*

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Activity 4 and 6 (Dialogue 1) pages 35, 36

A	*Yeah, look I understand that it is really difficult for you guys. However there have been a lot of accidents in your section and the assessments will help us find out if the new workers are doing the right thing.* ***Activity 4***
A	*Yeah I know that some of you think this is all a waste of time but when we find out who doesn't really understand the correct safety procedures, they can be trained - without having to run a training course for everybody.* ***Activity 4***
A	*How would be the best way to organise the assessments? There'll be two of us so we'll need 4 people per day and later in the week we'll be here to reassess if it's needed.* ***Activity 6***

Activity 5 page 36

Share the problem *How could we solve this problem?* *How will this affect your section?*	**Uncover needs** *What about.....?* *Is there a way.....?* *How about.....?* *What do you need to make it work smoothly?*

Activity 7 page 38

Interrupting *Sorry, before you go on , could I.....* *Don't forget that.....*	**Putting an opposing view point** *But what about...* *I'm not for a moment saying you're wrong, but...*
Disagreeing *I don't agree...*	**Showing uncertainty** *Do you think?.. I'm not sure...* *I don't know. I see what you mean but...* *Look, it's a good idea. But I'm just a bit concerned about...* *I've got some problems....*

Activity 9 page 39

Dialogue 3
Sample answer

A	*G'day Bob..I was wondering if you had a few minutes. I need to talk to you about an assessment for forklift licence I did today on Susie McCracken.*
S	*Yeah what is it mate?*
A	*She's not quite ready yet and needs to practise a bit more on reversing before I assess her again next week.*
S	*Sorry, impossible. We are short staffed and there are two more going on leave next week. I just can't spare her.*
A	*I understand that you're down a couple of workers but I would really like to assess her again next week, so she needs to spend a bit of time with a trainer during the week.*
S	*I really can't spare her during the week but I can't stop her from going for her licence.*
A	*Look I know it's difficult but she only needs to spend fifteen minutes a day and if she's got her forklift she can carry the heavy stuff to the bins.*
S	*I don't know maybe she could change her shift. Can the trainer come for the afternoon shift. It's too busy in the morning?*
A	*Yeah I'm sure he can. I'll arrange it with him and call you. Thanks for that.*
S	*OK I'll see what I can do - see you next week.*

Giving Instructions

Activity 1 page 50

Because the assessor backtracked. This could have caused an overload of information. The candidate may have had low level communication skills and it was just extra information they had to try to understand.

Activity 2 page 52

1. the first thing
   the second thing
   after that
   then finally
2. pick up
   move it
   place
   manoeuvre
   remove
   place

Questioning Techniques

Activity 1 page 57

1. What would you do if you entered a house for the first time that was obviously in a bad state of repair..... Hy
   Anything else? Pr
2. Hypothetical question used to assess underpinning knowledge, transfer of skills in a situation that could not be observed.
   Probing question used to give the candidate a chance to add extra critical information.

Activity 2 page 58

1. How do you determine the safe working load and load conditions that your machine can work under? open
   Where would you find the load centre on the plate? closed
   What does 600mm relate to? open
2. Open question used to get underpinning knowledge, or more complex information.
   Closed question used to get facts.
3. Show me the ID plate. instruction used instead of a question.
   Tell me a little bit about the ID plate. instruction used instead of a question.
   An instruction is given instead of a question. This is like a closed question and is used to get facts.

Giving Feedback

Activity 1 page 66

1.

Strategy	Script	Line No.
Be positive, without raising false expectations.	*Your preparation was well done. You had all the appropriate gear. That was fine. You treated the equipment OK.* *Your question and answering were good.* *You knew what you was doing.....That's the good part.*	1-2 4 6-7
Be precise about gaps in the candidate's performance.	*..when you were checking the back end part of it, you were very thorough except you missed the landing body.* *Now that's an important part. If that's worn and sticks down the hole.....*	9-10 12-13
Identify whether only part(s) of the assessment need to be repeated and, if so, which part.		
Suggest strategies to help the candidate overcome gaps.	Didn't suggest strategies but explained why the missed part was critically important.	12-13
Arrange another opportunity for the candidate to be assessed.	*But there's nothing wrong with doing it again in a couple of days time.*	17

2. Jim could have:
   - identified whether he was going to assess the whole task again or just be looking for the specific problem
   - suggested for example, that someone check he is doing the right thing before the next assessment or ask 'does he know how to check the 'landing body"
   - allowed the candidate more time for feedback, to ask questions etc

Activity 4 page 70

1. Your suggestion on how to handle that problem was not very practical.
2. Your computer skills are not very good. (This is still quite direct and could be softened even further by adding 'at the moment')

Activity 6 page 72

Your rapport with the client was good and you really showed empathy with her. The preparation for the client's bath was also good. However, you are not following the standard procedure for transferring a client from a wheel chair to the shower chair and besides this you are not following standard procedure for completing the hazard report forms which are critically important. Overall I'm assessing you as not yet competent so I will need to arrange a time for another assessment but I will only be looking at the two areas I mentioned.

Activity 7 page 73

also	addition (preparation and rapport were good)
however	contrast (good aspects followed by not so good)
besides this	addition (not following two different procedures)
overall	summary (weighing up good and not so good - final decision)
so	result (what will happen after the not yet competent decision)
but	contrast (don't need to assess all aspects)

Non-verbal Communication

Activity 5 page 82

a) **Corner position:** This enables people to engage in friendly conversation and fully observe one another's non-verbal signals. The corner of the table acts as a partial barrier and could help if the two people are not quite at ease with one another. A more co-operative position can be formed if one person shifts position.
b) **Cooperative position:** Working side by side but not looking directly at one another, does not allow all the non verbal signals to be picked up.
c) **Cooperative position:** Where the chairs are turned slightly towards one another, there is less formality in the arrangement.
d) **Fully co-operative:** The table simply acts as a handy place on which to put papers. 'Pointing' behaviour can take place when this arrangement is used.
e) **Competitive position:** The table acts as a complete defensive barrier.
f) **Independent position:** Definitely a non-conversational arrangement. Could possibly be used when a number of candidates are doing written assessments.

Activity 6 page 83

Example a) is concerned with the starting time of the assessment and
b) is inferring that there are a number of people to choose a starting time.

Plain English

Activity 1 page 87

1. Which department is responsible for quality testing?
2. Name two ways of giving daily work instructions.

Activity 2 page 87

Sample answers
1. What must you do if you think you have a leak in your fuel system?
2. How close can you drive your forklift truck to power lines?
3. Read the conditions and sign that you understand all of the instructions. Then start the assessment.

Activity 3 page 89

Print too small, no bold headings, needs font which is easier to read, no space around text.

Writing Instructions

Activity 5 page 92

1 a) Before you change a tyre:
   1. make sure the brakes are on
   2. loosen the wheel nuts
   3. remove the tyre

   b) The action word is first and the order is clear.
2 a) Answer the following questions. Then check your answers.
   b) The order is clear and only the essential information is written.
3 a) When you receive the documents go to the filing clerk. Make sure they are securely stored.
   b) The order is clear and the language is simple.

Writing feedback reports and recommendations

Activity 3 page 97

1. Joan is caring with clients, applies correct safety procedures, establishes good rapport.
2. Joan needs to familiarise herself with policy handbook as well as improve communication skills.
3. Joan attends communication skills training or one hour a week with the supervisor.

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Activity 4/ Activity 7 pages 99, 101

Joan is very caring with clients and applies correct safety procedures when transferring clients and using cleaning products. She also establishes a good rapport with her clients. However, she needs to familiarise herself with the workplace policy handbook as well as improving written communication skills. Hazard report forms were in correctly completed and messages to other workers attending the customer's house were unclear.

I recommend that Joan attend communication skills training on how to write workplace documents or that the supervisor allocates one hour per week for a couple of weeks to assist with report writing.

Activity 5 page 99

The assessment process is also a learning process for the candidate therefore you need to give detailed feedback even if the candidate has achieved competence. For example, perhaps the candidate was weak in some areas but excelled in others. Overall, the assessment was judged as competent. On the other hand, the candidate may have been assessed as not yet competent as some areas were good but the critical areas were not up to standard.

Activity 6 page 100

even if	condition
overall	summary
on the other hand	contrast
therefore	effect
as	reason

Activity 8 page 102

1. Discussions with all workplace supervisors should occur before any assessments commence. This softens the command because it adds an idea of choice.
2. Discussions with workplace personnel must occur before any assessments commence. This strengthens the command because there is no idea of choice.

***Communication Skills for Workplace Assessors* is a resource which can be used:**

- to assist people with the language and literacy requirements of training for the units *Plan, Conduct and Review Assessment* from the *Training Package for Assessment and Workplace Training BSZ98*
- as a stand alone course in communication skills required by workplace assessors
- as a professional development course for workplace assessor trainers in awareness raising of language and literacy issues involved in delivering the units *Plan, Conduct and Review Assessment.*

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